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THE

WORKS

OF

HANNAH MORE.

A NEW EDITION,

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WITH ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS,

IN ELEVEN VOLUMES.

NN. 6-3

VOL. I.

SACRED DRAMAS.—POEMS.

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GENERAL PREFACE.

WHATEVER objections may be urged against the literary character of the present day, it must however be allowed to exhibit an evident improvement in some material points. It is, for instance, no new observation, that vanity and flattery are now less generally ostensible, even in the most indifferent authors, than they were formerly in some of the best. The most self-sufficient writer is at length driven, by the prevailing sense of propriety, to be contented with *thinking* himself the prime genius of the age; but he seldom ventures to *tell* you that he thinks so. Vanity is compelled to acquire or to assume a better taste.

That spirit of independence, also, which has in many respects impressed so mischievous a stamp on the public character, has, perhaps, helped to correct the style of Prefaces and Dedications. Literary patronage is so much *shorn of its beams*, that it can no longer enlighten bodies which are in themselves opaque; so much abridged of its power, that it cannot force into notice a work which is not able to recommend

itself. The favour of an individual no longer boasts that buoyant quality which enables that to swim, which, by its own nature, is disposed to sink. The influence of an Augustus, or a Louis Quatorze, of a Mecænas, a Dorset, or a Halifax, could not now procure readers, much less could it compel admirers for the panegyrist, if the panegyrist himself could command admiration on no better ground than the authority of the patron. The once dilated Preface is shrunk into plain apology or simple exposition. The long and lofty dedication is (generally speaking) dwindled into a sober expression of respect for public virtue, a concise tribute of affection to private friendship, or an acknowledgment for personal obligation. It is no longer necessary for the dependant to be profane in order to be grateful. No more are all the divine attributes snatched from their rightful Possessor, and impiously appropriated by the needy writer to the opulent patron. He still makes, indeed, the eulogium of his protector, but not his apotheosis. The vainest poet of our day dares not venture, like him who has, however, so gloriously accomplished his own prediction, to say, in so many words, that his own work is more *sublime than the royal height of pyramids.* Nor, whatever secret compact he may make for its duration, does he openly undertake to promise for his verse, that it shall flow *co-equal with the rivers, and survive the established forms of the religion of his country.* The most venal poetic parasite no longer assures

his protector, with "unhappy Dryden," that mankind can no more subsist without *his* poetry, (the Earl of Middlesex's poetry!) than the world can subsist without the daily course of Divine Providence. And it is but justice to the more sober spirit of living literature to observe, that our modesty would revolt (putting our sense and our religion out of the question), were a modern poet to offer even an imperial patron to pick and choose his lodging among the Constellations; or, as a certain author has expressed it on a similar occasion, "to ask what apartment of the Zodiac he would be pleased to occupy."

So far at least our taste is reformed. And may we not venture to hope, from the affinity which should subsist between correct judgment and unadulterated principle, that our ideas of truth and manly integrity are improved also?

But it is time that I confine myself to the more immediate object of the present address, in which, in avoiding the exploded evil I have been reprobating, I would not affectedly run into the opposite, and, perhaps, prevailing extreme.

It may not, it is presumed, be thought necessary to apologise for the publication of this collection, by enumerating all the reasons which produced it. "Desire of friends" is now become a proverbial satire: the poet is driven from that once creditable refuge behind which an unfounded eagerness to appear in print

used to shelter itself; and is obliged to abandon the untenable forts and fastnesses of this last citadel of affectation. Dr. Johnson's sarcasm upon one plea will apply to all, and put to flight the whole hackneyed train of false excuses — "If the book were not written to be printed, I presume it was printed to be read."

These scattered pieces, besides that they had been suffered to pass through successive editions, with little or no correction, were, in their original appearance, of all shapes and sizes, and utterly unreducible to any companionable form. The Tragedies are preceded by their own apology. The "Essays" are omitted, as being a very juvenile production, and because the subjects of a few of them were analogous to some which have been taken up on higher ground, and treated more in detail in the "Strictures on Female Education." If it should be questioned whether the Tales which occupy the third volume and part of the fourth ought to have made a part of this collection, I can only answer, that, though in their original appearance it was found expedient to adopt a more than usually familiar manner, and colloquial style, yet, in all that relates to sentiment and principle, and the ends of general utility, I am not conscious of having, on any occasion, taken more pains. They are here given in an enlarged and improved form.

I should blush to reproduce so many slight productions of my early youth, did I not find

reason to be still more ashamed, that after a period of so many years, the progress will be found to have been so inconsiderable, and the difference so little apparent.

If I should presume to suggest as an apology for having still persisted to publish, that of the latter productions, usefulness has been more invariably the object; whereas in many of the earlier, amusement was more obviously proposed; if I were inclined to palliate my presumption by pleading

That not in Fancy's maze I wander'd long;

it might be retorted that the implied plea, in favour of the latter publications, exhibits no surer proof of humility in this instance than in the other. That, if in the first it was no evidence of the modesty of the writer to fancy she could amuse, in the last it furnishes little proof of the modesty of the woman to fancy that she can instruct. Now to amuse, or to instruct, or both, is so undeniably the intention of all who obtrude their works on the public, that no preliminary apology, no prefatory humiliation, can quite do away the charge of a certain consciousness of talents which is implied in the very undertaking. The author professes his inability, but he produces his book; and by the publication itself controverts his own avowal of alleged incapacity. It is to little purpose that the words are disparaging while the deed is assuming. Nor will that profession of self-

abasement be much regarded which is contradicted by an act that supposes self-confidence.

If, however, there is too seldom found in the writer of the book all the humility which the preface announces, he may be allowed to plead a humility, which is at least comparative. On this ground may I be permitted to declare, that at no period of my life did I ever feel such unfeigned diffidence at the individual appearance of even the slightest pamphlet (the slenderness of whose dimensions might carry some excuse for the small proportion of profit or pleasure it conveyed), as I now feel at sending this, perhaps too voluminous, collection into the world. This self-distrust may naturally be accounted for, by reflecting that this publication is deliberately made, not only at a time of life when I ought best to know my own faults, and the faults of my writings; but is made also at such a distance from the moment in which the several pieces were first struck out, that the mind has had time to cool from the hurry and heat of composition: the judgment has had leisure to operate, and it is the effect of that operation to rectify false notions and to correct rash conclusions. The critic, even of his own works, grows honest, if not acute, at the end of twenty years. The image, which he had fancied glowed so brightly when it came fresh from the furnace, time has quenched; the spirit, which he thought fixed and essential, has evaporated; many of the ideas which he imposed not only on his

reader, but on himself, perhaps for originals, more reading and more observation compel him to restore to their owners. And having detected from the perusal of abler works, either plagiarisms in his own, of which he was not aware, or coincidences which will pass for plagiarisms; and blending with the new judgment of the critic the old indignation of the poet, who of us in this case is not angry with those who have *said our good things before us?* We not only discover that what we thought we had invented we have only remembered; but we find also that what we had believed to be perfect is full of defects; in what we had conceived to be pure gold we discover much tinsel. For the revision, as was observed above, is made at a period when the eye is brought by a due remoteness into that just position which gives a clear and distinct view of things; a remoteness which disperses the illusions of vision, scatters the mists of vanity, reduces objects to their natural size, restores them to their exact shape, makes them appear to the sight such as they are in themselves, and such as, perhaps, they have long appeared to all except the author.

That I have added to the mass of general knowledge by one original idea, or to the stock of virtue by one original sentiment, I do not presume to hope. But that I have laboured assiduously to make that kind of knowledge which is most indispensable to common life

familiar to the unlearned, and acceptable to the young; that I have laboured to inculcate into both the love and practice of that virtue of which they had before derived the principles from higher sources, I will not deny to have attempted.

To what is called learning I have never had any pretension. Life and manners have been the objects of my unwearied observation; and every kind of study and habit has more or less recommended itself to my mind, as it has had more or less reference to these objects. Considering this world as a scene of much action, and of little comparative knowledge; not as a stage for exhibition, or a retreat for speculation, but as a field on which the business which is to determine the concerns of eternity is to be transacted; as a place of low regard as an end, but of unspeakable importance as a means; a scene of short experiment, but lasting responsibility; I have been contented to pursue myself, and to present to others, those truths, which, if obvious and familiar, are yet practical, and of general application: things which, if of little show, are yet of some use; and which, if their separate value be not great, yet their aggregate importance is not inconsiderable. I have pursued, not that which demands skill, and ensures renown, but,

That which before us lies in daily life.

If I have been favoured with a measure of

success, which has as much exceeded my expectation as my desert, I ascribe it partly to a disposition in the public mind to encourage, in these days of alarm, attack, and agitation, any productions of which the tendency is favourable to good order and Christian morals, even though the merit of the execution by no means keeps pace with that of the principle. In some instances I trust I have written seasonably when I have not been able to write well. Several pieces perhaps of small value in themselves have helped to supply in some inferior degree the exigence of the moment; and have had the advantage, not of superseding the necessity, or the appearance, of abler writings, but of exciting abler writers; who, seeing how little I had been able to say on topics upon which much might be said, have more than supplied my deficiencies by filling up what I had only superficially sketched out. On that which had only a temporary use, I do not aspire to build a lasting reputation.

In the progress of ages, and after the gradual accumulation of literary productions, the human mind — I speak not of the scholar, or the philosopher, but of the multitude, — the human mind, Athenian in this one propensity, *the desire to hear and to tell some new thing*, will reject, or overlook, or grow weary even of the standard works of the most established authors; while it will peruse with interest the current volume or popular pamphlet of the day. This hunger after novelty, by the way, is an instrument of incon-

ceivable importance placed by Providence in the hands of every writer, and should strike him forcibly with the duty of turning this sharp appetite to good account, by appeasing it with sound and wholesome aliment. It is not perhaps that the work in actual circulation is comparable to many works which are neglected; but it is *new*. And let the fortunate author militant, of moderate abilities, who is banqueting on his transient, and, perhaps, accidental popularity, use that popularity wisely; and, bearing in mind that he himself must expect to be neglected in his turn, let him thankfully seize his little season of fugitive renown; let him devote his ephemeral importance conscientiously to throw into the common stock his quota of harmless pleasure or of moral profit. Let him unaffectedly rate his humble but not unuseful labours at their just price, nor despondingly conclude that he has written altogether in vain, though he do not see a public revolution of manners succeed, as he had perhaps too fondly flattered himself, to the publication of his book. Let him not despair, if, though he have had many readers, he has had but few converts. Nor let him, on the other hand, be elated by a celebrity which he may owe more to his novelty than to his genius, more to a happy combination in the circumstances of the times than to his own skill or care; — and most of all, to his having diligently observed, that

There is a tide in the affairs of men;

and to his having, accordingly, launched his bark at the favourable flow.

The well-intentioned and well-principled author who has uniformly thrown all his weight, though that weight be but small, into the right scale, may have contributed his fair proportion to that great work of reformation, which will, I trust, unless a total subversion of manners should take place, be always carrying on in the world; but which the joint concurrence of the wisdom of ages will find it hard to accomplish. Such an author may have been, in his season and degree, the accepted agent of that Providence who works by many and different instruments, by various and successive means; in the same manner as in the manual labour of the mechanic, it is not by a few ponderous strokes that great operations are effected, but by a patient and incessant following up of the blow, — by reiterated and unwearied returns to the same object; in the same manner as in the division of labour, many hands of moderate strength and ability may, by co-operation, do that which a very powerful individual might have failed to accomplish. It is the privilege of few authors to contribute largely to the general good, but almost every one may contribute something. No book, perhaps, is perfectly neutral; nor are the effects of any altogether indifferent. From all our reading there will be a bias on the actings of the mind, though with a greater or less degree of inclination, according to the degree of impression made by the

nature of the subject, the ability of the writer, and the disposition of the reader. And though, as was above observed, the whole may produce no *general* effect, proportionate to the hopes of the author, yet some truth, may be picked out from among many that are neglected; some single sentiment may be seized on for present use; some detached principle may be treasured up for future practice.

If in the records of classic story we are told that "the most superb and lasting monument that was ever consecrated to beauty was that to which every lover carried a tribute;" then among the accumulated production of successive volumes, those which, though they convey no new information, yet illustrate on the whole some old truth; those which, though they add nothing to the stores of genius or of science, yet help to establish and enforce a single principle of virtue, may be accepted as an additional mite cast by the willing hand of affectionate indigence into the treasury of Christian morals.

The great father of Roman eloquence has asserted, that though every man should propose to himself the highest degrees in the scale of excellence, yet he may stop with honour at the second or the third. Indeed the utility of some books to some persons would be defeated by their very superiority. The writer may be above the reach of his reader; he may be too lofty to be pursued; he may be too profound to be fathomed; he may be too abstruse to be in-

vestigated; for to produce delight there must be intelligence; there must be something of concert and congruity. There must be not merely that intelligibility which arises from the perspicuousness of the author, but that also which depends on the capacity and perception of the reader. Between him who writes and him who reads there must be a kind of coalition of interests, something of a partnership, however unequal the capital, in mental property; a sort of joint stock of tastes and ideas. The student must have been initiated into the same intellectual commerce with him whom he studies; for large bills are only negotiable among the mutually opulent.

There are, perhaps, other reasons why popularity is no infallible test of excellence. Many readers even of good faculties, if those faculties have been kept inert by a disuse of exertion, feel often most sympathy with writers of a middle class; and find more repose in a mediocrity which lulls and amuses the mind, than with a loftiness and extent which exalts and expands it. To enjoy works of superlative ability, as was before suggested, the reader must have been accustomed to drink at the same spring from which the writer draws; he must be at the expense of furnishing part of his own entertainment, by bringing with him a share of the science or of the spirit with which the author writes.

These are some of the considerations, which, while my gratitude has been excited by the favourable reception of my various attempts, have

helped to correct that vanity which is so easily kindled where merit and success are evidently disproportionate.

For fair criticism I have ever been truly thankful. For candid correction, from whatever quarter it came, I have always exhibited the most unquestionable proof of my regard, by adopting it. Nor can I call to mind any instance of real improvement which has been suggested to me by which I have neglected to profit. I am not insensible to human estimation. To the approbation of the wise and good I have been, perhaps, but too sensible. But I check myself in the indulgence of this dangerous pleasure by recollecting that the hour is fast approaching to all, to me it is *very* fast approaching, when no human verdict, of whatever authority in itself, and however favourable to its object, will avail anything, but inasmuch as it is crowned with the acquittal of that Judge whose favour is eternal life. Every emotion of vanity dies away, every swelling of ambition subsides before the consideration of this solemn responsibility. And though I have just avowed my deference for the opinion of private critics and of public censors; yet my anxiety with respect to the sentence of both is considerably diminished by the reflection that not only the writings but the writer will very soon be called to another tribunal, to be judged on far other grounds than those on which the descisions of literary statutes are framed; a tribunal at which the sentence passed will de-

pend on far other causes than the observation or neglect of the rules of composition; than the violation of any precepts, or the adherence to any decrees of critic legislation.

With abundant cause to be humbled at the mixed motives of even my least exceptionable writings, I am willing to hope that, in those of later date, at least, vanity has not been the governing principle. And if, in sending abroad the present collection, some sparks of this inextinguishable fire should struggle to break out, let it be at once quenched by the reflection, that of those persons whose kindness stimulated, and whose partiality rewarded, my early efforts; of those who would have dwelt on these pages with most pleasure, the eyes of the greater part are closed, to open no more in this world. Even while the pen is in my hand framing this remark, more than one affecting corroboration of its truth occurs. May this reflection, at once painful and salutary, be ever at hand to curb the insolence of success, or to countervail the mortification of defeat! May it serve to purify the motives of action, while it inspires resignation to its event! And may it effect both without diminishing the energies of duty — without abating the activity of labour!

Barley Wood,
1801.

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SACRED DRAMAS:

CHIEFLY INTENDED

FOR YOUNG PERSONS.

THE SUBJECTS TAKEN FROM THE BIBLE.

All the Books of the Bible are either most admirable and exalted Pieces of Poetry, or are the best Materials in the world for it. COWLEY.

TO HER GRACE

THE DUCHESS OF BEAUFORT,

THESE SACRED DRAMAS

ARE, WITH THE MOST PERFECT RESPECT,

INSCRIBED:

AS, AMONG THE MANY AMIABLE

AND DISTINGUISHED QUALITIES

WHICH ADORN HER MIND,

AND ADD LUSTRE TO HER RANK,

HER

EXCELLENCE IN THE MATERNAL CHARACTER

GIVES A PECULIAR PROPRIETY

TO HER PROTECTION OF THIS LITTLE WORK;

WRITTEN WITH A HUMBLE WISH

TO PROMOTE THE LOVE OF PIETY AND VIRTUE

IN YOUNG PERSONS,

BY HER GRACE'S

MOST OBEDIENT,

MOST OBLIGED,

AND MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

HANNAH MORE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

I AM as ready as the most rigid Critic to confess, that nothing can be more simple and inartificial than the plans of the following Dramas. In the construction of them I have seldom ventured to introduce any persons * of my own creation; still less did I imagine myself at liberty to invent circumstances. I reflected with awe, that *the place whereon I stood was holy ground.* All the latitude I permitted myself was, to make such persons as I selected act under such circumstances as I found, and express such sentiments as, in my humble judgment, appeared not unnatural to their characters and situations. — Some of the speeches are so long as to retard the action; for I rather aspired after Moral Instruction than the purity of Dramatic Composition. I am aware that it may be brought as an objection, that I have now and then made my Jewish characters speak too much like Christians, as it may be questioned whether I have not occasionally ascribed to them a degree of light and

* Never, indeed, except in DANIEL, and that of necessity; as the Bible furnishes no more than two persons, Daniel and Darius; and these were not sufficient to carry on the business of the piece.

INTRODUCTION.

OH for the sacred energy which struck
The harp of Jesse's son! or for a spark
Of that celestial flame which touch'd the lips
Of bless'd Isaiah *; when the Seraphim
With living fire descended, and his soul
From sin's pollution purg'd! or one faint ray,
If human things to heav'nly I may join,
Of that pure spirit which inflam'd the breast
Of Milton, GOD's own poet! when, retir'd
In fair enthusiastic vision rapt,
The *nightly visitant* deign'd bless his couch
With inspiration, such as never flow'd
From Acidale or Aganippe's fount!
Then, when the sacred fire within him burnt,
He spake as man or angel might have spoke,
When man was pure, and angels were his guests.
It will not be. — Nor prophet's burning zeal,
Nor muse of fire, nor yet to sweep the strings
With sacred energy, to me belongs;
Nor with Miltonic hand to touch the chords
That wake to ecstasy. From me, alas!
The secret source of harmony is hid;
The magic powers which catch the ravish'd soul

* Isaiah, chap. vi.

In melody's sweet maze, and the clear streams
Which to pure fancy's yet untasted springs
Enchanted lead. Of these I little know!
Yet, all unknowing, dare THY aid invoke,
SPIRIT OF TRUTH! to bless these worthless lays:
Nor impious is the hope; for thou hast said,
That none who ask in faith should ask in vain.
You I invoke not now, ye fabled Nine!
I not invoke you, though you well were sought
In Greece and Latium, sought by deathless bards,
Whose syren song enchants; and shall enchant,
Thro' Time's wide-circling round, tho' false their faith,
And less than human were the gods they sung.
Tho' false their faith, they taught the best they knew;
And (blush, O Christians!) liv'd above their faith.
They would have bless'd the beam, and hail'd the day
Which chas'd the moral darkness from their souls.
Oh! had their minds receiv'd the clearer ray
Of Revelation, they had learn'd to scorn
Their rites impure, their less than human gods,
Their wild mythology's fantastic maze.
Pure Plato! how had thy chaste spirit hail'd
A faith so fitted to thy moral sense!
What hadst thou felt, to see the fair romance
Of high imagination, the bright dream
Of thy pure fancy, more than realis'd!
Sublime enthusiast! thou hadst bless'd a scheme
Fair, good, and perfect. How had thy wrapt soul
Caught fire, and burnt with a diviner flame!
For e'en thy fair idea ne'er conceiv'd
Such plenitude of bliss, such boundless love,
As Deity made visible to sense.

Unhappy BRUTUS! philosophic mind!
Great midst the errors of the Stoic school!
How had thy kindling spirit joy'd to find
That thy lov'd virtue was no empty name!
Nor hadst thou met the vision at Philippi;
Nor hadst thou sheath'd thy bloody dagger's point
Or in the breast of Cæsar or thy own.

The Pagan page how far more wise than ours!
They with the gods they worshipp'd graced their song:
Our song we grace with gods we disbelieve!
Retain the manners, but reject the creed.
Shall fiction only raise poetic flame?
And shall no altars blaze, O TRUTH, to thee?
Shall falsehood only please, and fable charm?
And shall eternal Truth neglected lie,
Because immortal, slighted or profan'd?
Truth has our rev'rence only, not our love;
Our praise, but not our heart: a deity,
Confess'd, but shunn'd; acknowledg'd, not ador'd;
Alarm'd we dread her penetrating beams;
She comes too near us, and too brightly shines.

Why shun to make our duty our delight?
Let *pleasure* be the motive, disallow
All high incentives drawn from God's command:
Where shall we trace, through all the page profane,
A livelier pleasure and a purer source
Of innocent delight, than the fair book
Of holy Truth presents? for ardent youth,
The sprightly narrative; for years mature,
The moral document, in sober robe
Of grave philosophy array'd; which all
Had heard with admiration, had embrac'd

With rapture, had the shades of Academe,
Or the learn'd Porch produc'd it: — tomes had then
Been multiplied on tomes, to draw the veil
Of graceful allegory, to unfold
Some hidden source of beauty, now not felt!
Do not the powers of soul-enchanting song,
Strong imagery, bold figure, every charm
Of eastern flight sublime, apt metaphor,
And all the graces in thy lovely train,
Divine Simplicity! assemble all
In Sion's songs, and bold Isaiah's strain?
Why should the classic eye delight to trace
The tale corrupted from its prime pure source,
How Pyrrha and the fam'd Thessalian king
Restor'd the ruin'd race of lost mankind;
Yet turn, incurious, from the patriarch sav'd,
The rescu'd remnant of a delug'd world?
Why are we taught delighted to recount
Alcides' labours, yet neglect to note
Heroic Samson midst a life of toil
Herculean? Pain and peril marking both,
A life eventful and disastrous death.
Can all the tales which Grecian story yields;
Can all the names the Roman page records
Of wondrous friendship and surpassing love;
Can gallant Theseus and his brave compeer;
Orestes, and the partner of his toils;
Achates and his friend; Euryalus
And blooming Nisus, pleasant in their lives,
And undivided by the stroke of death;
Can each, can all, a lovelier picture yield
Of virtuous friendship: can they all present

A tenderness more touching than the love
Of Jonathan and David? — Speak, ye young!
Who, undebauch'd as yet with fashion's lore,
And unsophisticate, unbiass'd judge,
Say, is your quick attention more arous'd
By the red plagues which wasted smitten Thebes,
Than heaven's avenging hand on Pharaoh's host?
Or do the vagrant Trojans, driven by fate
On adverse shores successive, yield a theme
More grateful to the eager appetite
Of young impatience, than the wand'ring tribes
The Hebrew leader through the desert led?
The beauteous Maid *, (tho' tender is the tale,)
Whose guiltless blood on Aulis' altar stream'd,
Smites not the bosom with a softer pang
Than her in fate how sadly similar,
The Gileaditish virgin — victims both
Of vows unsanctify'd.——

Such are the lovely themes which court the Bard,
Scarce yet essay'd in verse — for verse how meet
While heav'n-descended song, forgetting oft
Her sacred dignity and high descent,
Debases her fair origin; oft spreads
Corruption's deadly bane, pollutes the heart
Of innocence, and with unhallow'd hand
Presents the poison'd chalice, to the brim
Fill'd with delicious ruin, minist'ring
Th' unwholesome rapture to the fever'd taste,
While its fell venom, with malignant pow'r,
Strikes at the root of virtue, with'ring all
Her vital energy. Oh! for some balm

* Iphigenia.

Of sov'reign power, to raise the drooping Muse
To all the health of virtue! to infuse
A gen'rous warmth, to rouse a holy zeal,
And give her high conceptions of herself,
Her dignity, her worth, her aim, her end!
For me, Eternal Spirit, let thy word
My path illume! O thou compassionate God!
Thou know'st our frame, thou know'st we are but dust;
From dust a Seraph's zeal thou wilt not seek,
Nor wilt thou ask an Angel's purity.
But hear, and hearing pardon; as I strive,
Tho' with a feeble voice and flagging wing,
A glowing heart, but pow'rless hand, to point
The faith of favour'd man to heav'n; to sing
The ways inscrutable of heav'n to man;
May I, by thy celestial guidance led,
Fix deep in my own heart the truths I teach!
In my own life transcribe whate'er of good
To others I propose! and by thy rule
Correct th' irregular *, reform the wrong,
Exalt the low, and brighten the obscure!
Etill may I note, how all th' agreeing parts
Of this consummate system join to frame
One fair, one finish'd, one harmonious whole!
Trace the close links which form the perfect chain
In beautiful connexion; mark the scale
Whose nice gradations, with progression true,
For ever rising, end in DEITY!

* What in me is dark
Illumine! what is low, raise and support! *Paradise Lost.*

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES:

A

Sacred Drama.

Let me assert eternal Providence, &c.
And justify the ways of God to man. — *Parad. Los.*

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA:

HEBREW WOMEN.

JOCHEBED, Mother of Moses.
MIRIAM, his Sister, a Prophetess.

EGYPTIANS.

The PRINCESS, King Pharaoh's Daughter.
MELITA, and other Attendants.

SCENE — *On the Banks of the Nile.*

The Subject is taken from the Second Chapter of the Book of Exodus.

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES.

PART I.

JOCHEBED, MIRIAM.

Joc. WHY was my pray'r accepted? Why did Heav'n
In anger hear me, when I ask'd a son?
Ye dames of Egypt! ye triumphant mothers!
You no imperial tyrant marks for ruin;
You are not doom'd to see the babes you bore,
The babes you fondly nurture, bleed before you!
You taste the transports of a mother's love,
Without a mother's anguish! wretched Israel!
Can I forbear to mourn the different lot
Of thy sad daughters! — Why did God's own hand
Rescue his chosen race by Joseph's care?
Joseph! th' elected instrument of Heav'n,
Decreed to save illustrious Abraham's sons,
What time the famine rag'd in Canaan's land.
Israel, who then was spared, must perish now!
Thou great mysterious Pow'r, who hast involv'd
Thy wise decrees in darkness, to perplex
The pride of human wisdom, to confound
The daring scrutiny, and prove the faith
Of thy presuming creatures! hear me now!
O vindicate thy honour; clear this doubt.

Teach me to trace this maze of Providence:
Why save the fathers, if the sons must perish?
Mir. Ah me, my mother! whence these floods of grief?
Joc. My son! my son! I cannot speak the rest,
Ye that have sons can only know my fondness!
Ye who have lost them, or who fear to lose,
Can only know my pangs! none else can guess them.
A mother's sorrows cannot be conceiv'd
But by a mother — Wou'd I were not one!
Mir. With earnest pray'rs thou didst request this son,
And Heav'n has granted him.
Joc. O sad estate
Of human wretchedness! so weak is man,
So ignorant and blind, that did not God
Sometimes withhold in mercy what we ask,
We should be ruin'd at our own request.
Too well thou know'st, my child, the stern decree
Of Egypt's cruel king, hard-hearted Pharaoh;
" That every male of Hebrew mother born
" Must die." Oh! do I live to tell it thee?
Must die a bloody death! My child, my son,
My youngest born, my darling must be slain!
Mir. The helpless innocent! and must he die?
Joc. No: if a mother's tears, a mother's prayers,
A mother's fond precautions can prevail,
He shall not die. I have a thought, my Miriam,
And sure the God of mercies who inspir'd,
Will bless the secret purpose of my soul,
To save his precious life.
Mir. Hop'st thou that Pharaoh —

Joc. I have no hope in Pharaoh, much in God;
Much in the ROCK OF AGES.
Mir. Think, O think,
What perils thou already hast incurr'd,
And shun the greater which may yet remain.
Three months, three dangerous months thou hast
preserv'd
Thy infant's life, and in thy house conceal'd him!
Should Pharaoh know!
Joc. Oh! let the tyrant know,
And feel what he inflicts! Yes, hear me, Heav'n!
Send thy right-aiming thunderbolts — But hush,
My impious murmurs! Is it not thy will,
Thou, infinite in mercy? Thou permitt'st
This seeming evil for some latent good.
Yes, I will laud thy grace, and bless thy goodness
For what I have, and not arraign thy wisdom
For what I fear to lose. Oh, I will bless thee
That Aaron will be spar'd! that my first born
Lives safe and undisturb'd! that he was given me
Before this impious persecution rag'd!
Mir. And yet who knows, but the fell tyrant's rage
May reach *his* precious life?
Joc. I fear for him,
For thee, for all. A doating parent lives
In many lives; thro' many a nerve she feels;
From child to child the quick affections spread,
For ever wand'ring, yet for ever fix'd.
Nor does division weaken, nor the force
Of constant operation e'er exhaust
Parental love. All other passions change
With changing circumstances; rise or fall,

Dependent on their object; claim returns;
Live on reciprocation, and expire
Unfed by hope. A mother's fondness reigns
Without a rival, and without an end.

Mir. But say what Heav'n inspires to save thy son?

Joc. Since the dear fatal morn which gave him birth,
I have revolv'd in my distracted mind
Each means to save his life: and many a thought
Which fondness prompted, prudence has oppos'd
As perilous and rash. With these poor hands
I've fram'd a little ark of slender reeds;
With pitch and slime I have secured the sides.
In this frail cradle I intend to lay
My little helpless infant, and expose him
Upon the banks of Nile.

Mir. 'Tis full of danger.

Joc. 'Tis danger to expose, and death to keep him.

Mir. Yet, Oh! reflect. Should the fierce crocodile,
The native and the tyrant of the Nile,
Seize the defenceless infant!

Joc. Oh, forbear!
Spare my fond heart. Yet not the crocodile,
Nor all the deadly monsters of the deep,
To me are half so terrible as Pharaoh,
That heathen king, that royal murderer!

Mir. Should he escape, which yet I dare not hope,
Each sea-born monster, yet the winds and waves
He cannot 'scape.

Joc. Know, God is ev'ry where;
Not to one narrow, partial spot confin'd;

No, not to chosen Israel: he extends
Through all the vast infinitude of space;
At his command the furious tempests rise —
The blasting of the breath of his displeasure.
He tells the world of waters when to roar;
And, at his bidding, winds and seas are calm:
In him, not in an arm of flesh, I trust;
In him, whose promise never yet has fail'd,
I place my confidence.

Mir. What must I do?
Command thy daughter; for thy words have wak'd
An holy boldness in my youthful breast.

Joc. Go, then, my MIRIAM, go, and take the infant.
Buried in harmless slumbers there he lies:
Let me not see him — spare my heart that pang.
Yet sure, one little look may be indulg'd,
And I may feast my fondness with his smiles,
And snatch one last, last kiss. — No more, my heart;
That rapture would be fatal — I should keep him.
I could not doom to death the babe I clasp'd:
Did ever mother kill her sleeping boy?
I dare not hazard it — The task be thine.
Oh! do not wake my child; remove him softly;
And gently lay him on the river's brink.

Mir. Did those magicians, whom the sons of Egypt
Consult and think all-potent, join their skill;
And was it great as Egypt's sons believe;
Yet all their secret wizard arts combin'd,
To save this little ark of bulrushes,
Thus fearfully expos'd, could not effect it:
Their spells, their incantations, and dire charms
Could not preserve it.

Joc. Know this ark is charm'd
With incantations Pharaoh ne'er employ'd;
With spells which impious Egypt never knew:
With invocations to the living God,
I twisted every slender reed together,
And with a prayer did every ozier weave.
Mir. I go.
Joc. Yet ere thou go'st, observe me well;
When thou hast laid him in his wat'ry bed,
Oh leave him not; but at a distance wait,
And mark what Heaven's high will determines for him.
Lay him among the flags on yonder beach,
Just where the royal gardens meet the Nile.
I dare not follow him, Suspicion's eye
Would note my wild demeanour! MIRIAM, yes,
The mother's fondness would betray the child.
Farewell! God of my fathers, oh, protect him!

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES.

PART II.

Enter MIRIAM, *after having deposited the child.*

YES, I have laid him in his wat'ry bed,
His wat'ry grave, I fear! — I tremble still;
It was a cruel task — still I must weep!
But ah! my mother! who shall soothe thy griefs?
The flags and sea-weeds will awhile sustain
Their precious load; but it must sink ere long!
Sweet babe, farewell! yet think not I will leave thee;
No, I will watch thee till the greedy waves
Devour thy little bark; I'll sit me down,
And sing to thee, sweet babe; thou canst not hear,
But 'twill amuse me, while I watch thy fate.

[*She sits down on the bank, and sings.*

SONG.

I.

Thou, who canst make the feeble strong,
O God of Israel, hear my song;
Not mine such notes as Egypt's daughters raise;
'Tis thee, O God of Hosts, I strive to praise.

II.

Ye winds, the servants of the Lord,
Ye waves, obedient to his word,
Oh spare the babe committed to your trust;
And Israel shall confess the Lord is just!

III.

Though doom'd to find an early grave,
This infant, Lord, thy power can save,
And he whose death's decreed by Phraraoh's hand,
May rise a prophet to redeem the land.

[*She rises and looks out.*

What female form bends hitherward her steps,
Of royal port she seems; perhaps some friend,
Rais'd by the guardian care of bounteous Heav'n,
To prop the falling house of Levi. — Soft!
I'll listen unperceiv'd; these trees will hide me.

[*She stands behind.*

Enter the PRINCESS *of* EGYPT, *attended by a train of Ladies.*

Prin. No farther, Virgins; here I mean to rest,
To taste the pleasant coolness of the breeze;
Perhaps to bathe in this translucent stream.
Did not our holy law * enjoin th' ablution
Frequent and regular, it still were needful
To mitigate the fervours of our clime.
MELITA, stay — the rest at distance wait.

[*They all go out, except one.*

* The ancient Egyptians used to wash their bodies four times every twenty-four hours.

[*The* PRINCESS *looks out.*

Sure, or I much mistake, or I perceive
Upon the sedgy margin of the Nile
A chest; entangled in the reeds it seems:
Discern'st thou aught?

Mel. Something, but what I know not.

Prin. Go and examine what this sight may mean.
[*Exit Maid.*

Mir. [*behind.*] O blest, beyond my hopes! he is discover'd;
My brother will be sav'd! who is this stranger?
Ah! 'tis the Princess, cruel Pharaoh's daughter.
If she resemble her inhuman sire,
She must be cruel too; yet fame reports her
Most merciful and mild. — Great Lord of all,
By whose good Spirit bounteous thoughts are given,
And deeds of love perform'd — be gracious now,
And touch her soul with mercy!

Re-enter MELITA.

Prin. Well, Melita!
Hast thou discover'd what the vessel is?

Mel. Oh, Princess, I have seen the strangest sight!
Within the vessel lies a sleeping babe,
A fairer infant have I never seen!

Prin. Who knows but some unhappy Hebrew woman
Has thus expos'd her infant, to evade
The stern decree of my too cruel sire.
Unhappy mothers! oft my heart has bled
In secret anguish o'er your slaughter'd sons;
Powerless to save, yet hating to destroy.

Mel. Should this be so, my Princess knows the danger.

Prin. No danger should deter from acts of mercy.

Mir. [*behind.*] A thousand blessings on her princely head!

Prin. Too much the sons of Jacob have endur'd
From royal Pharaoh's unrelenting hate;
Too much our house has crush'd their alien race,
Is't not enough that cruel task-masters
Grind them by hard oppression? not enough
That iron bondage bows their spirits down?
Is't not enough my sire his greatness owes,
Those structures which the world with wonder views,
His palaces, his fanes magnificent,
To much insulted Israel's patient race?
To them his growing cities owe their splendour;
Their toils fair Rameses and Pythom built;
And shall we fill the measure of our crimes;
And crown our guilt with murder? and shall I
Sanction the sin I hate? forbid it mercy!

Mel. I know thy royal father fears the strength
Of this still growing race, who flourish more
The more they are oppress'd: he dreads their numbers.

Prin. Apis forbid! Pharaoh afraid of Israel!
Yet should this outcast race, this hapless people,
E'er grow to such a formidable greatness,
(Which all the gods avert whom Egypt worships,)
This infant's life can never serve their cause,
Nor can his single death prevent their greatness.

Mel. Trust not to that vain hope. By weakest means
And most unlikely instruments, full oft

Are great events produc'd. This rescu'd child
Perhaps may live to serve his upstart race
More than an host.

Prin. How ill does it beseem
Thy tender years and gentle womanhood,
To steel thy breast to pity's sacred touch!
So weak, so unprotected is our sex,
So constantly expos'd, so very helpless,
That did not Heav'n itself enjoin compassion,
Yet human policy should make us kind;
Lest in the rapid turn of Fortune's wheel,
We live to need the pity we refuse.
Yes, I will save him — Mercy, thou hast conquer'd!
Lead on — and from the rushes we'll remove
The feeble ark which cradles this poor babe.

[*The* PRINCESS *and her Maid go out.*

MIRIAM *comes forward.*

Mir. How poor were words to speak my boundless joy;
The Princess will protect him! bless her, Heav'n!

[*She looks out after the Princess, and describes her action.*

With what impatient steps she seeks the shore!
Now she approaches where the ark is laid!
With what compassion, with what angel sweetness,
She bends to look upon the infant's face!
She takes his little hand in hers — he wakes —
She smiles upon him — hark, alas! he cries;
Weep on, sweet babe! weep on, till thou hast touch'd
Each chord of pity, waken'd every sense
Of melting sympathy, and stol'n her soul!

She takes him in her arms — O lovely Princess!
How goodness heightens beauty! now she clasps him
With fondness to her heart, she gives him now
With tender caution to her damsel's arms:
She points her to the palace, and again
This way the Princess bends her gracious steps;
The virgin train retire and bear the child.

Re-enter the PRINCESS.

Prin. Did ever innocence and infant beauty
Plead with such dumb but powerful eloquence?
If I, a stranger, feel these soft emotions,
What must the mother who expos'd him feel!
Go, fetch a woman of the Hebrew race,
That she may nurse the babe: — And, by her garb,
Lo, such a one is here!

Mir. Princess, all hail!
Forgive the bold intrusion of thy servant.
Who stands a charm'd spectator of thy goodness.

Prin. I have redeem'd an infant from the waves,
Whom I intend to nurture as mine own.

Mir. My transports will betray me! [*aside*] Generous Princess!

Prin. Know'st thou a matron of the Hebrew race
To whom I may confide him?

Mir. Well I know
A prudent matron of the house of Levi;
Her name is Jochebed, the wife of Amram;
Of gentle manners, fam'd throughout her tribe
For soft humanity; full well I know
That she will rear him with a mother's love!
[*Aside*] Oh! truly spoke! a mother's love, indeed!

To her despairing arms I mean to give
This precious trust!—the nurse shall be the mother!

Prin. With speed conduct this matron to the palace.

Yes, I will raise him up to princely greatness,
And he shall be my son; I'll have him train'd,
By choicest sages, in the deepest lore
Of Egypt's sapient sons: his name be *Moses*,
For I have drawn him from the perilous flood.

[*They go out. She kneels.*

Thou Great Unseen! who causest gentle deeds,
And smil'st on what thou causest; thus I bless thee,
That thou didst deign consult the tender make
Of yielding human hearts, when thou ordain'dst
Humanity a virtue! didst not make it
A rigorous exercise to counteract
Some strong desire within; to war and fight
Against the powers of Nature; but didst bend
The nat'ral bias of the soul to mercy:
Then mad'st that mercy duty! Gracious Pow'r!
Mad'st the keen rapture exquisite as right;
Beyond the joys of sense; as pleasure sweet,
As reason vigorous, and as instinct strong!

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES.

PART III.

Enter JOCHEBED.

I've almost reach'd the place — with cautious steps
I must approach the spot where he is laid,
Lest from the royal gardens any spy me.
— Poor babe! ere this the pressing calls of hunger
Have broke thy short repose; the chilling waves,
Ere this, have drench'd thy little shivering limbs,
What must my babe have suffered! — No one sees me!
But soft, does no one listen? — Ah! how hard,
How very hard for fondness to be prudent!
Now is the moment to embrace and feed him.

[*She looks out.*

Where's Miriam? she has left her little charge,
Perhaps through fear; perhaps she was detected!
How wild is thought! how terrible conjecture!
A mother's fondness frames a thousand fears;
With thrilling nerve feels every real ill,
And shapes imagin'd miseries into being.

[*She looks towards the river.*

Ah me! where is he? soul-distracting sight!
He is not there — he's lost, he's gone, he's drown'd!
Toss'd by each beating surge my infant floats.
Cold, cold, and wat'ry is thy grave, my child!

Oh no! — I see the ark — Transporting sight!
[*She goes towards it.*
I have it here. — Alas, the ark is empty!
The casket's left, the precious gem is gone!
You spared him pitying spirits of the deep!
But vain your mercy, some insatiate beast,
Cruel as Pharaoh, took the life you spar'd —
And I shall never, never see my boy!

Enter MIRIAM.

Joc. Come and lament with me thy brother's loss
Mir. Come and adore with me the God of Jacob!
Joc. Miriam! — the child is dead!
Mir. He lives! he lives!
Joc. Impossible! — Oh, do not mock my grief;
See'st thou that empty vessel?
Mir. From that vessel
Th' Egyptian Princess took him.
Joc. Pharaoh's daughter?
Then still he will be slain: a bloodier death
Will terminate his woes.
Mir. His life is safe!
For know she means to rear him as her own.
Joc. [*Falls on her knees in rapture.*
To God, the Lord, the glory be ascrib'd!
Oh, magnified for ever be THY might
Who mock'st all human forethought! who o'errul'st
The hearts of sinners to perform thy work,
Defeating their own purpose; who canst plant
Unlook'd-for mercy in a heathen's heart,
And from the depth of evil bring forth good!
[*She rises.*

Mir. O blest event, beyond our warmest hopes!
Joc. What! shall my son be nurtur'd in a court,
In princely grandeur bred? taught every art
And ev'ry wondrous science Egypt knows?
Yet, ah! I tremble, Miriam; should he learn
With Egypt's polish'd arts her baneful faith!
Oh, worse exchange for death! yes, should he learn,
In yon proud palace to disown His hand
Who thus has sav'd him: should he e'er embrace
(As sure he will, if bred in Pharaoh's court)
The gross idolatries which Egypt owns,
Her graven images, her brutish gods, —
Then shall I wish he had not been preserv'd
To shame his fathers and deny his faith.
Mir. Then to dispel thy fears and crown thy joy,
Hear farther wonders — Know, the gen'rous Princess
To thine own care thy darling child commits.
Joc. Speak, while my joy will give me leave to listen!
Mir. By her commission'd, thou behold'st me here,
To seek a matron of the Hebrew race
To nurse him; thou, my mother, art that matron.
I said I knew thee well; that thou would'st rear him
Ev'n with a mother's fondness; she who bare him
(I told the Princess) would not love him more.
Joc. Fountain of mercy! whose pervading eye
Can look within and read what passes there,
Accept my thoughts for thanks; I have no words,
My soul, o'erfraught with gratitude, rejects
The aid of language — Lord! behold my heart.
Mir. Yes, thou shalt pour into his infant mind
The purest precepts of the purest faith.

Joc. Oh! I will fill his tender soul with virtue,
And warm his bosom with devotion's flame!
Aid me, celestial Spirit! with thy grace,
And be my labours with thy influence crown'd!
Without it they were vain. Then, then, my Miriam,
When he is furnish'd, 'gainst the evil day,
With God's whole armour *, girt with sacred truth,
And as a breastplate wearing righteousness,
Arm'd with the Spirit of God, the shield of faith,
And with the helmet of salvation crown'd,
Inur'd to watching, and dispos'd to pray'r;
Then may I send him to a dangerous court,
And safely trust him in a perilous world,
Too full of tempting snares and fond delusions!

Mir. May bounteous Heav'n thy pious cares reward!

Joc. Oh, Amram! Oh, my husband! when thou com'st,
Wearied at night, to rest thee from the toils
Impos'd by haughty Pharaoh, what a tale
Have I to tell thee! Yes: thy darling son
Was lost, and is restor'd; was dead, and lives!

Mir. How joyful shall we spend the live-long night
In praises to Jehovah; who thus mocks
All human foresight, and converts the means
Of seeming ruin into great deliverance.

Joc. Had not my child been doom'd to such strange perils,
As a fond mother trembles to recall,
He had not been preserv'd.

Mir. And mark still farther;

* 2 Thess. chap. v. Ephes. chap. vi.

Had he been sav'd by any other hand,
He had been still expos'd to equal ruin.
Joc. Then let us join to bless the hand of Heav'n
That this poor outcast of the house of Israel,
Condemn'd to die by Pharaoh, kept in secret
By my advent'rous fondness; then expos'd
E'en by that very fondness which conceal'd him,
Is now, to fill the wondrous round of mercy,
Preserv'd from perishing by Pharaoh's daughter,
Sav'd by the very hand which sought to crush him!
Wise and unsearchable are all thy ways,
Thou GOD OF MERCIES! — Lead me to my child.

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES.

PART IV.

Enter JOCHEBED.

How does the dread of loss enhance a blessing!
Methinks I never lov'd my boy till now.
To HIM who gives him back I will restore
My rescued infant.

Enter MIRIAM.

Miriam, why this haste?
Elate thou seemest.

Mir. Suddenly my sense
Is wrapt in ecstasy. — What is't I see?
What visions of delight! what scenes to come!
That prescient spirit given me from on high,
Reveals the hidden things of unborn time,
And leads my view through dim futurity.
This favour'd infant is not snatch'd from death
Merely to soothe a mother's fond distress,
Nor solely to adorn the house of Levi.
An honour'd instrument of God, he's rais'd
For mighty purposes. He will be great
Beyond ambition's dream: renown'd beyond
All who have gone before him. He shall rule,
But not in Pharaoh's kingdom. Heaven forefend!
He shall be learn'd in all the policy,

The wisdom, and the arts, which Egypt boasts.
But not for Egypt's weal shall he employ
The science she shall teach him. He shall stand
Before Jehovah's face, shall hear his voice —
Familiar, as a man with man holds converse,
Receive his high behests, shall teach mankind
All that they owe to God and to each other.
Knowledge and skill unrivall'd shall be his;
Honours the most remote in him shall meet;
Ruler and judge, prophet and lawgiver,
Deliverer and guide.

Joc. What says my daughter?
O what am I, and what my father's house,
That I should be so bless'd?

Mir. Yes, he shall lead
The chosen people to the promis'd land,
But shall not enter it. Mystérious fate!
God shall avenge thro' him the wrongs of Israel.
On Egypt he shall bring such varied woes
As fancy scarce can image; plague on plague.
Each new infliction heavier than the last:
All loathsome, all abhorr'd, detested things,
Follow'd by all that are most terrible;
Darkness and pestilence — her first-born slain,
With blood of her own sons her houses delug'd,
Blood-stain'd her streets, her rivers chang'd to blood.

Joc. Ah me! what horrors, tho' on foes they fall!
But shall not Israel share in Egypt's woes?
It must — the plague selects not its sad objects,
Stops not to ask if its next hapless victim
Be heathen or believer. — Darkness too
Is dark to all. Th' impartial hand of death

Enquires not if the breast it means to pierce
Be friend or enemy.
Mir. Hush'd be thy fears.
Know, the destroying angel shall have charge
To spare God's favour'd people; to them also
The darkness shall be light, the night be day.
Then shall the harden'd monarch be dismay'd,
Shall vacillate, consent, forbid, resolve.
Thy son, the heav'n-taught guide, shall lead them forth,
And perjur'd Pharaoh be constrain'd to loose
The galling chain of slavery.
Joc. Blest event!
My country will be free, and my lov'd son
Jehovah's delegate! But why will God,
Supreme in mercy, harden the stern heart
Of the proud king?
Mir. God hardens no man's heart.
'Tis not His work; he does no more than leave it
To its own callous nature: if his grace
Be once withdrawn, the hard grows harder still.
Joc. As the withdrawing of the sun's warm beams,
Leaving the chill wave to its natural temper,
Congeals the liquid stream.
Mir. E'en so, my mother.
Joc. Protect thy people, Lord, and spare my son.
Mir. Ah! what successive scenes in order pass!
I see all Israel march. Ah, glorious vision!
Myriads! A moving nation! Moses leads.
Here manly vigour marches in the van;
There female weakness follows as it may:
Here helpless childhood, there decrepid age!

Now they advance! patient, they cheer each other.
What do I see? tho' indistinct, I see it!
A moving pillar marches with our bands;
A pillar dark at noon, at midnight light:
By day a cloud to shade the fainting hosts,
By night a fire to guide them on their way.
Joc. Miriam! thy visage changes. What alarms thee?
Mir. Ah me! they move no longer, ocean stands
Direct in front, barrier invincible!
No friendly vessel to conduct them o'er.
What refuge now is left? for on their rear
Pharaoh and his vast hordes pursue their flight:
The sea before, the enemy behind,
And Pi-hahiroth's lofty mountains stand
Close on each side, impossible to scale.
Joc. Nothing remains.
Mir. Omnipotence remains.
They look before, behind, on either side;
Where shall they turn for succour? — they look *up!*
They look to HIM to whom none look in vain.
The ocean stop them? No. It stops them not,
O prodigy! what sights incredible
Crowd on my mental eye! Near and more near
The ranks are driv'n to seaward. O the transport!
The flood divides — the parted waves recede!
A solid wall is formed on either side:
Firm, dry, and safe the intervening space.
Joc. But dare they venture on?
Mir. Yes! they dare venture.
The fearless Hebrews trust the miracle:
With holy confidence their bands advance.
They find an easy passage through the deep ——

They touch the farther shore. How loud their joy!
But still the foe pursues.
Joc. And have they 'scap'd
The ocean's rage to fall by that of man?
Mir. Arm'd at all points see Egypt's sons advance!
They reach the open passage.
Joc. All is lost.
Mir. But what suspends their progress? Something stays them;
Slow, and more slow, their lagging motion seems.
Their chariot wheels drive heavily along.
They stop; they're moveless. Now, O ecstasy!
The refluent waters haste to meet again!
They close above their heads! Egypt, engulfed,
Is lost to sight! — the rider and his horse
Together sink — they sink — they rise no more!
Joc. Can this be realis'd?
Mir. It can, it will.
'Tis great; but great is HE whose will controls it.
Methinks I hear the shouts of victory,
I hear triumphant Moses' grateful song!
Thou art our strength, O Lord! the work is thine.
Thine is the power, and thine be all the praise;
Pharaoh is sunk — his chariots and his host
Plung'd in the dark abyss! As lead they sank.
To save the favour'd sons of Jacob's race,
The flood, no longer liquid, stood congeal'd.
The crystal wall stood firm, as Israel pass'd:
When Egypt came, the crystal wall dissolv'd.
Thou didst stretch forth Thy hand, and Moses pass'd;
Thou didst stretch forth Thy hand, and Pharaoh sank.
Lord! who among the gods is like to Thee?

Fearful in praises, wonderful in power,
Glorious in holiness! thou great I AM!
What mighty marvels Thy right hand has wrought!
Thy hand pre-eminent! thou art my God,
And all I have is thine! My father's God!
Thy name I will exalt; 'tis THOU hast conquer'd.
See Pharaoh's captains perish with his host!
The horse and rider meet one common fate.
The depths have cover'd them: they sink together.
Vainly they boasted — "Though the slaves escape,
Yet we will follow them, o'ertake, and crush them."
Joc. How should a worm contend against his God?
Mir. Not Pharaoh, nor his captains; not the sea,
With all the perils of his roaring waves;
Not Pi-hahiroth's mountains capt with clouds,
Can ought obstruct, while God is on our side.
O let the nations hear, the heathen tremble,
The people wail; let Palestine go weep.
Thou hast redeem'd thy chosen from the grasp
Of hard oppression. Thou shalt bring them out,
And firmly plant them in thy holy place.
Thy purchas'd people shall inhabit there,
The mount of thine inheritance!
Joc. My daughter!
Thy spirit sinks beneath the mighty impulse.
Mir. Again! my mother! heard I not the shouts,
The song of victory? I too shall join it!
Yes, Miriam's feeble voice shall aid the chorus,
And swell the hymn of triumph. Israel's daughters
With songs and timbrels shall prolong the strain.
Joc. O thy prophetic mind! what wonders fill it!
Mir. This is not all. The wonder is to come!

This land of promise, wealthy Canaan's land,
Where Israel, after many a painful toil,
Shall finally have rest; this place of blessings
Only prefigures that eternal rest
Reserv'd for God's true servants, those who fought
The fight of faith on earth. Hear further wonders:
Moses, though great, is but the type of ONE
Far greater; ONE predestin'd to redeem
Not Israel only, but the human race;
ONE who in after time shall rescue men,
Not from the body's slav'ry, the brief bondage
Of life and time; but who shall burst the chains
Which keep the soul enthrall'd, the chains of sin;
Shall free the captive from the galling yoke
Of Satan; rescue from eternal death,
And finally restore, Man's ruin'd race.

Note.—The Author is fearful that she may be thought, in this last part, to have exceeded the bounds of poetical license. For though Miriam, in the chapter which contains the Song of Moses *, is called a prophetess; and though the prophet Micah, in his sixth chapter, speaks of Miriam as assisting jointly with her brothers, Moses and Aaron, in the redemption of Israel from captivity, yet we hear little or nothing of her elsewhere in her prophetic character.

* Exodus, chap. xv.

DAVID AND GOLIATH:

A

Sacred Drama.

O bienheureux mille fois,
L'Enfant que le Seigneur aime,
Qui de bonne heure entend sa voix,
Et que ce Dieu daigne instruire lui-même!
Loin du mond élevé; de tous les dons des Cieux,
Il est orné dès sa naissance;
Et du méchant l'abord contagieux
N'altère point son innocence. — ATHALIE.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

SAUL, King of Israel.
ABNER, his General.
JESSE.
ELIAB,
ABINADAB, } Sons of Jesse.
DAVID,
GOLIATH, the Philistine Giant.

Philistines, Israelites, &c. &c.
Chorus of Hebrew Women.

The Scene lies in the Camp in the Valley of Elah, and the adjacent Plain.

The Subject is taken from the Seventeenth Chapter of the First Book of Samuel.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART I.

SCENE — *A Shepherd's Tent on a Plain.*

DAVID, *under a spreading tree, plays on his harp and sings.*

I.

GREAT Lord of all things! Pow'r divine!
Breathe on this erring heart of mine
Thy grace serene and pure;
Defend my frail, my erring youth,
And teach me this important truth,
The humble are secure!

II.

Teach me to bless my lowly lot
Confin'd to this paternal cot,
Remote from regal state!
Content to court the cooling glade,
Inhale the breeze, enjoy the shade,
And love my humble fate.

III.

No anxious vigils here I keep,
No dreams of gold distract my sleep,

Nor lead my heart astray;
Nor blasting Envy's tainted gale
Pollutes the pleasures of the vale,
To vex my harmless day.

IV.

Yon tow'r, which rears its head so high,
And bids defiance to the sky,
Invites the hostile winds:
Yon branching oak, extending wide,
Provokes destruction by its pride,
And courts the fall it finds.

V.

Then let me shun th' ambitious deed,
And all the dangerous paths which lead
To honours falsely won:
Lord! in thy sure protection blest,
Submissive will I ever rest,
And may thy will be done!

[*He lays down his harp and rises.*

Dav. Methinks this shepherd's life were dull and tasteless
Without the charm of soothing song or harp:
With it, not undelightful is the haunt
Of wood, or lonely grove, or russet plain,
Made vocal by the Muse. With this lov'd harp,
This daily solace of my cares, I sooth'd
The melancholy monarch, when he lay
Smit by the chill and spirit-quenching hand
Of black despair. God of my fathers, hear me!
Here I devote my harp, my verse, myself,

To thy blest service! gladly to proclaim
Glory to God on high, on earth good will
To man; to pour my grateful soul before thee:
To sing thy pow'r, thy wisdom, and thy love,
And every gracious attribute: to paint
The charms of heav'n-born virtue! So shall I
(Tho' with long interval of worth) aspire
To imitate the work of saints above,
Of Cherub and of Seraphim. My heart,
My talents, all I am, and all I have,
Is thine, O Father! Gracious Lord, accept
The humble dedication! Offer'd gifts
Of slaughter'd bulls and goats sacrifical
Thou hast refus'd: but lo, I come, O Lord!
To do thy will; the living sacrifice
Of an obedient heart I lay before thee:
This humble off'ring more shall please thee, Lord,
Than horned bullocks, ceremonial rites,
New moons and sabbaths, passovers and fasts!
Yet those I, too, will keep; but not in lieu
Of holiness substantial, inward worth;
As commutation cheap for pious deeds
And purity of life, but as the types
Of better things; as fair external signs
Of inward holiness and secret truth.

But see, my father, good old Jesse, comes!
To cheer the setting evening of whose life,
Content, a simple shepherd here I dwell,
Though Israel is in arms; and royal Saul,
Encamp'd in yonder field, defies Philistia.

JESSE, DAVID.

Jes. Blest be the gracious Pow'r who gave my age
To boast a son like thee! Thou art the staff
Which props my bending years, and makes me bear
The heavy burden of declining age,
With fond complacence. How unlike thy fate,
O venerable Eli! But two sons,
But only two to gild the dim remains
Of life's departing day, and bless thy age,
And both were curses to thee! Witness, Heav'n,
In all the cruel catalogue of pains
Humanity turns o'er, if there be one
So terrible to human tenderness
As an unnatural child!

Dav. Oh! my lov'd father!
Long may'st thou live, in years and honours rich,
To taste and to communicate the joys,
The thousand fond endearing charities
Of tenderness domestic; Nature's best
And loveliest gift, with which she well atones
The niggard boon of fortune.

Jes. Oh! my son!
Of all the graces which adorn thy youth,
I, with a father's fondness, must commend
Thy tried humility. For though the seer
Pour'd on thy chosen head the sacred oil
In sign of future greatness, in sure pledge
Of highest dignity, yet here thou dwell'st
Content with toil, and careless of repose;
And (harder still for an ingenuous mind)
Content to be obscure; content to watch,
With careful eye, thine humble father's flock!

O earthly emblem of celestial things!
So Israel's shepherd watches o'er his fold:
The weak ones in his fost'ring bosom bears;
And gently leads, in his sustaining hand,
The feeble ones with young.

Dav. Know'st thou, my father,
Aught from the field? for tho' so near the camp,
Tho' war's proud ensigns stream on yonder plain,
And all Philistia's swarming hosts encamp,
Oppos'd to royal Saul, beneath whose banners
My brothers lift the spear, — I have not left
My fleecy charge, by thee committed to me,
To learn the various fortune of the war.

Jes. And wisely hast thou done. Thrice happy realm,
Who shall submit one day to his command
Who can so well obey! Obedience leads
To certain honours. Not the tow'ring wing
Of eagle-plum'd ambition mounts so surely
To fortune's highest summit as obedience.

[*A distant sound of trumpets.*

But why that sudden ardour, O my son?
That trumpet's sound (tho' so remote its voice,
We hardly catch the echo as it dies,)
Has rous'd the mantling crimson in thy cheek,
Kindled the martial spirit in thine eye;
And my young shepherd feels an hero's fire!

Dav. Thou hast not told the posture of the war?
And much my beating bosom pants to hear.

Jes. Uncertain is the fortune of the field.
I tremble for thy brothers, thus expos'd
To constant peril; nor for them alone

Does the quick feeling agonise my heart.
I feel for all! — I mourn that ling'ring war
Still hangs his banner o'er my native land,
Belov'd Jerusalem! O war! what art thou?
At once the proof and scourge of man's fall'n state!
After the brightest conquest, what appears
Of all thy glories? for the vanquish'd, chains!
For the proud victor, what? Alas! to reign
O'er desolated nations! a drear waste,
By one man's crime, by one man's lust of pow'r,
Unpeopled! Ravag'd fields assume the place
Of smiling harvests, and uncultur'd plains
Succeed the fertile vineyard; barren waste
Deforms the spot once rich with luscious fig
And the fat olive — Devastation reigns.
Here, rifled temples are the cavern'd dens
Of savage beasts, or haunt of birds obscene:
There, pop'lous cities blacken in the sun,
And in the gen'ral wreck, proud palaces
Lie undistinguish'd, save by the dun smoke
Of recent conflagration. When the song
Of dear-bought joy, with many a triumph swell'd,
Salutes the victor's ear, and soothes his pride,
How is the grateful harmony profan'd
With the sad dissonance of virgins' cries,
Who mourn their brothers slain! of matrons hoar,
Who clasp their wither'd hands, and fondly ask,
With iteration shrill, their slaughter'd sons!
How is the laurel's verdure stain'd with blood!
And soil'd with widow's tears!

Dav. Thrice mournful truth!
Yet when our country's sacred rights are menac'd,

Her firm foundations shaken to the base;
When all we love, and all that we revere,
Our hearths and altars, children, parents, wives,
Our liberties and laws, the Throne they guard,
Are scorn'd and trampled on—then, then, my father!
'Tis then Religion's voice, then God himself
Commands us to defend his injur'd name,
And think the victory cheaply bought with life.
'Twere then inglorious weakness, mean self-love,
To lie inactive, when the stirring voice
Of the shrill trumpet wakes the patriot youth,
And, with heroic valour, bids them dare
The foul idolatrous bands, e'en to the death.

Jes. God and thy country claim the life they gave;
No other cause can sanctify resentment.

Dav. Sure virtuous friendship is a noble cause!
Oh, were the princely Jonathan in danger,
How would I die, well pleas'd in his defence!
When, 'twas long since, then but a stripling boy,
I made short sojourn in his father's palace,
(At first to soothe his troubled mind with song,
His armour-bearer next,) I well remember
The gracious bounties of the gallant prince.
How would he sit, attentive to my strain,
While to my harp I sung the harmless joys
Which crown a shepherd's life! How would he cry,
Blest youth! far happier in thy native worth,
Far richer in the talent Heav'n has lent thee,
Than if a crown hung o'er thy anxious brow.
The jealous monarch mark'd our growing friendship;
And as my favour grew with those about him,
His royal bounty lessen'd, till at length,

For Bethl'hem's safer shades I left the court.
Nor would these alter'd features now be known,
Grown into manly strength; nor this chang'd form,
Enlarg'd with age, and clad in russet weed.
Jes. I have employment for thee, my lov'd son!
Will please thy active spirit. Go, my boy!
Haste to the field of war, to yonder camp,
Where in the vale of Elah mighty Saul
Commands the hosts of Israel. Greet thy brothers;
Observe their deeds, note their demeanour well,
And mark if on their actions Wisdom waits.
Bear to them, too, (for well the waste of war
Will make it needful) such plain healthful viands
As furnish out our frugal shepherd's meal.
And to the valiant captain of their host
Present such rural gifts as suit our fortune:
Heap'd on the board within my tent thou'lt find them.
Dav. With joy I'll bear thy presents to my brothers;
And to the valiant captain of their host
The rural gifts thy gratitude assigns him.
Delightful task! — for I shall view the camp!
What transport to behold the tented field,
The pointed spear, the blaze of shields and arms,
And all the proud accoutrements of war!
But, oh! far dearer transport would it yield me,
Could this right arm alone avenge the cause
Of injur'd Israel! could my single death
Preserve the guiltless thousands doom'd to bleed.
Jes. Let not thy youth be dazzled, O my son!
With deeds of bold emprise, as valour only
Were virtue, and the gentle arts of peace,
Of truth and justice, were not worth thy care.

When thou shalt view the splendours of the war,
The gay caparison, the burnish'd shield,
The plume-crown'd helmet, and the glitt'ring spear,
Scorn not the humble virtues of the shade,
Nor think that Heav'n views only with applause
The active merit and the busy toil
Of heroes, statesmen, and the bustling sons
Of public care. These have their just reward,
In wealth, in honours, and the well-earn'd fame
Their high achievements bring. 'Tis in this view
That virtue is her proper recompense:
Wealth, as its natural consequence, will flow
From industry: toil with success is crown'd:
From splendid actions high renown will spring;
Such is the usual course of human things;
For Wisdom infinite permits, that thus
Effects to causes be proportionate,
And nat'ral ends by nat'ral means achiev'd.
But in the future estimate which Heav'n
Will make of things terrestrial, know, my son,
That no inferior blessing is reserv'd
For the mild passive virtues: meek Content,
Heroic Self-denial, nobler far
Than all th' achievements noisy fame reports,
When her shrill trump proclaims the proud success
Which desolates the nations. But, on earth,
These are not always prosperous — mark the cause
Eternal Justice keeps them for the bliss
Of final recompense, for the dread day
Of gen'ral retribution. O my son!
The ostentatious virtues which still press
For notice and for praise; the brilliant deeds

Which live but in the eye of observation,
These have their meed at once. But there's a joy,
To the fond votaries of fame unknown,
To hear the still small voice of Conscience speak
Its whisp'ring plaudit to the silent soul.
Heav'n notes the sigh afflicted Goodness heaves;
Hears the low plaint by human ear unheard,
And from the cheek of patient Sorrow wipes
The tear, by mortal eye unseen or scorn'd.

Dav. As Hermon's dews their grateful freshness shed,
And cheer the herbage, and the flowers renew,
So do thy words a quick'ning balm infuse,
And grateful sink in my delighted soul.

Jes. Go then, my child! and may the gracious God
Who bless'd our fathers bless my much-lov'd son!

Dav. Farewell, my father! — and of this be sure,
That not one precept from thy honour'd lips
Shall fall by me unnotic'd; not one grace,
One venerable virtue which adorns
Thy daily life, but I, with watchful care
And due observance, will in mine transplant it.

[*Exit* DAVID.

Jes. He's gone! and still my aching eyes pursue,
And strain their orbs still longer to behold him.
Oh! who can tell when I may next embrace him?
Who can declare the counsels of the Lord?
Or when the moment pre-ordain'd by Heav'n
To fill his great designs, may come? This son,
This blessing of my age, is set apart
For high exploits; the chosen instrument

Of all-disposing Heav'n for mighty deeds.
Still I recall the day, and to my mind
The scene is ever present, when the Seer,
Illustrious Samuel, to the humble shades
Of Bethlehem came, pretending sacrifice,
To screen his errand from the jealous king.
He sanctified us first, me and my sons;
For sanctity increas'd should still precede
Increase of dignity. When he declar'd
He came, commission'd from on High, to find,
Among the sons of Jesse, Israel's king,
Astonishment entranc'd my wond'ring soul!
Yet was it not a wild tumultuous bliss;
Such rash delight as promis'd honours yield
To light vain minds: no, 'twas a doubtful joy,
Chastis'd by tim'rous virtue, lest a gift
So splendid and so dang'rous might destroy
Him it was meant to raise. My eldest born,
Eliab, tall of stature, I presented;
But God, who judges not by outward form,
But tries the heart, forbade the holy prophet
To choose my eldest born. For Saul, he said,
Gave proof, that fair proportion, and the grace
Of limb or feature, ill repaid the want
Of virtue. All my other sons alike
By Samuel were rejected; till, at last,
On my young boy, on David's chosen head,
The prophet pour'd the consecrated oil.
Yet ne'er did pride elate him, ne'er did scorn
For his rejected elders swell his heart.
Not in such gentle charity to him
His haughtier brothers live: but all he pardons.

To meditation, and to humble toil,
To pray'r, and praise devoted, here he dwells.
Oh, may the graces which adorn retreat
One day delight a court! record his name
With saints and prophets, dignify his race;
And may the sacred songs his leisure frames
Instruct mankind, and sanctify a world!

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART II.

SCENE — *The Camp.*

ELIAB, ABINADAB, ABNER, ISRAELITES.

El. STILL is th' event of this long war uncertain;
Still do the adverse hosts on either side
Protract, with ling'ring caution, an encounter,
Which must to one be fatal.
Abin. This descent,
Thus to the very confines of our land,
Proclaims the sanguine hope that fires the foe.
In Ephes-dammim boldly they encamp:
Th' uncircumcis'd Philistines pitch their tents
On Judah's hallow'd earth.
El. Full forty days
Has the insulting giant, proud Goliath,
The champion of Philistia, fiercely challeng'd
Some Israelitish foe. But who so vain
To dare such force unequal? who so bent
On sure destruction, to accept his terms,
And rush on death, beneath the giant force
Of his enormous bulk?
Abin. 'Tis near the time
When in th' adjacent valley which divides

Th' opposing armies, he is wont to make
His daily challenge.
El. Much I marvel, brother,
No greetings from our father reach our ears.
With ease and plenty blest, he little recks
The daily hardships which his sons endure.
But see! behold his darling boy approaches!
Abin. How, David here! whence this unlook'd-for guest?
El. A spy upon our actions; sent, no doubt,
To scan our deeds, with beardless gravity
Affecting wisdom: to observe each word,
To magnify the venial faults of youth,
And construe harmless mirth to foul offence.

Enter DAVID.

Dav. All hail, my dearest brothers!
El. Means thy greeting
True love, or arrogant scorn?
Dav. Oh, most true love!
Sweet as the precious ointment which bedew'd
The sacred head of Aaron, and descended
Upon his hallow'd vest; so sweet, my brothers,
Is fond fraternal amity: such love
As my touch'd bosom feels at your approach.
El. Still that fine glozing speech, those holy saws,
And all that trick of studied sanctity,
Of smooth-turn'd periods and trim eloquence,
Which charms thy doating father! But confess,
What dost thou here? Is it to soothe thy pride,
And gratify thy vain desire to roam
In quest of pleasures unallow'd? or com'st thou,

A willing spy, to note thy brother's deeds?
Where hast thou left those few poor straggling sheep?
More suited to thy ignorance and years
The care of those, than here to wander idly:
Why cam'st thou hither?
Dav. Is there not a cause?
Why that displeasure kindling in thine eye,
My angry brother? why those taunts unkind?
Not idly bent on sport; not to delight
Mine eye with all this gay parade of war;
To gratify a roving appetite,
Or fondly to indulge a curious ear
With any tale of rumour, am I come;
But to approve myself a loving brother.
I bring the blessing of your aged sire,
With gifts of such plain cates and rural viands
As suit his frugal fortune. Tell me now,
Where the bold Captain of your host encamps?
El. Wherefore enquire? what boots it thee to know?
Behold him there: great Abner fam'd in arms.
Dav. I bring thee, mighty Abner, from my father
(A simple shepherd swain in yonder vale),
Such humble gifts as shepherd swains bestow.
Ab. Thanks, gentle youth! with pleasure I receive
The grateful off'ring. Why does thy quick eye
Thus wander with unsatisfied delight?
Dav. New as I am to all the trade of war,
Each sound has novelty; each thing I see
Attracts attention; every noise I hear
Awakes confus'd emotions; indistinct,

Yet full of charming tumult, sweet distraction.
'Tis all delightful hurry! Oh! the joy
Of young ideas painted on the mind,
In the warm glowing colours fancy spreads
On objects not yet known, when all is new,
And all is lovely! Ah; what warlike sound
Salutes my ravish'd ear? [*Sound of trumpet.*
Ab. 'Tis the Philistine,
Proclaiming by his herald, through the ranks,
His near approach. Each morning he repeats
His challenge to our bands.
Dav. Ha! what Philistine?
Who is he?
El. Wherefore ask? for thy raw youth
And rustic ignorance, 'twere fitter learn
Some rural art! some secret to prevent
Contagion in thy flocks; some better means
To save their fleece immaculate. These mean arts
Of soft inglorious peace far better suit
Thy low obscurity, than thus to seek
High things pertaining to exploits of arms.
Dav. Urg'd as I am, I will not answer thee.
Who conquers his own spirit, O my brother!
He is the only conqueror. — Again
That shout myterious! Pray you, (*to Abner*) tell me who
This proud Philistine is, who sends defiance
To Israel's hardy chieftains?
Ab. Stranger youth!
So lovely and so mild is thy demeanour,
So gentle and so patient; such the air
Of candour and of courage which adorns

Thy blooming features, thou hast won my love:
And I will tell thee.
Dav. Mighty Abner, thanks!
Ab. Thrice, and no more, he sounds, his daily rule!
This man of war, this champion of Philistia,
Is of the sons of Anak's giant-race;
Goliath is his name. His fearful stature,
Unparallel'd in Israel, measures more
Than twice three cubits. On his tow'ring head
A helm of burnish'd brass the giant wears,
So pond'rous, it would crush the stoutest man
In all our hosts. A coat of mailed armour
Guards his capacious trunk; compar'd with which,
The amplest oak that spreads his rugged arms
In Bashan's grove were small. About his neck
A shining corslet hangs. On his vast thigh
The plaited cuirass, firmly jointed, stands.
But who shall tell the wonders of his spear,
And hope to gain belief? Of massive iron
Its temper'd frame; not less than the broad beam
To which the busy weaver hangs his loom:
Not to be wielded by a mortal hand,
Save by his own. An armour-bearer walks
Before this mighty champion, in his hand
Bearing the giant's shield. Thrice ev'ry morn
His herald sounds the trumpet of defiance!
Off'ring at once to end the long-drawn war
In single combat, 'gainst that hardy foe
Who dares encounter him.
Dav. Say, mighty Abner,
What are the haughty terms of his defiance?
Ab. Proudly he stalks around th' extremest bounds

Of Elah's vale. His herald sounds the note
Of offer'd battle. Then the furious giant,
With such a voice as from the troubled sky
In vollied thunder breaks, thus sends his challenge: —
" Why do you set your battle in array,
Ye men of Israel? Wherefore waste the lives
Of needless thousands? Why protract a war
Which may at once be ended? Are not you
Servants to Saul, your king? And am not I,
With triumph let me speak it, a Philistine?
Choose out a man from all your armed hosts,
Of courage most approv'd, and I will meet him;
His single arm to mine. Th' event of this
Shall fix the fate of Israel and Philistia.
If victory favour him, then will we live
Your tributary slaves; but if my arm
Be crown'd with conquest, you shall then live ours.
Give me a man, if your effeminate bands
A man can boast. Your armies I defy!"

Dav. What shall be done to him who shall subdue
This vile idolater?

Ab. He shall receive
Such ample bounties, such profuse rewards,
As might inflame the old, or warm the coward,
Were not the odds so desperate.

Dav. Say, what are they?

Ab. The royal Saul has promis'd that bold hero,
Who should encounter and subdue Goliath,
All dignity and favour; that his house
Shall be set free from tribute, and ennobled
With the first honours Israel has to give.
And for the gallant conqueror himself,

No less a recompense than the fair princess,
Our monarch's peerless daughter.
Dav. Beauteous Michal!
It is indeed a boon which kings might strive for.
And has none answer'd yet this bold defiance?
What! all this goodly host of Israelites!
God's own peculiar people! all afraid
T' assert God's injur'd honour and their own?
Where is the king, who in his early youth
Wrought deeds of fame? Where princely Jonathan?
Not so the gallant youth Philistia fear'd
At Bozez and at Seneh *; when the earth
Shook from her deep foundations, to behold
The wondrous carnage of his single hand
On the uncircumcis'd. When he exclaim'd,
With glorious confidence — "Shall numbers awe me?
God will protect his own: with him to save,
It boots not, friends, by many or by few."
This was a hero! Why does he delay
To meet this boaster? For thy courtesy,
Thrice noble Abner, I am bound to thank thee.
Would'st thou complete thy gen'rous offices?
I dare not ask it.
Ab. Speak thy wishes freely:
My soul inclines to serve thee.
Dav. Then, O Abner,
Conduct me to the king! There is a cause
Will justify this boldness!
El. — Braggard, hold!
Ab. I take thee at thy word; and will, with speed,
Conduct thee to my royal master's presence.

* 1 Samuel, xiv.

In yonder tent the anxious monarch waits
Th' event of this day's challenge.
Dav. Noble Abner,
Accept my thanks. Now to thy private ear,
If so thy grace permit, I will unfold
My secret soul, and ease my lab'ring breast,
Which pants with high designs, and beats for glory.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART III.

SCENE — *Saul's tent.*

SAUL.

WHY was I made a king? what I have gain'd
In envied greatness and uneasy pow'r,
I've lost in peace of mind, in virtue lost!
Why did deceitful transports fire my soul
When Samuel plac'd upon my youthful brow
The crown of Israel? I had known content,
Nay happiness, if happiness unmixt
To mortal man were known, had I still liv'd
Among the humble tents of Benjamin.
A shepherd's occupation was my joy,
And every guiltless day was crown'd with peace:
But now, a sullen cloud for ever hangs
O'er the faint sunshine of my brightest hours,
Dark'ning the golden promise of the morn.
I ne'er shall taste the dear domestic joys
My meanest subjects know. True, I have sons,
Whose virtues would have charm'd a private man,
And drawn down blessings on their humble sire.
I love their virtues too; but 'tis a love
Which jealousy has poison'd. Jonathan
Is all a father's fondness could conceive

Of amiable and good — Of that no more!
He is too popular; the people doat
Upon th' ingenuous graces of his youth.
Curs'd popularity! which makes a father
Detest the merit of a son he loves:
How did their fond idolatry, perforce,
Rescue his sentenc'd life, when doom'd by lot
To perish at Beth-aven *, for the breach
Of strict injunction, that of all my bands,
Not one that day should taste of food and live!
My subjects clamour at this tedious war,
Yet of my num'rous armed chiefs, not one
Has courage to engage this man of Gath.
Oh for a champion bold enough to face
This giant-boaster, whose repeated threats
Strike thro' my inmost soul! There was a time —
Of that no more! — I am not what I was.
Should valiant Jonathan accept the challenge,
'Twould but increase his influence, raise his fame,
And make the crown sit loosely on my brow.
Ill could my wounded spirit brook the voice
Of harsh comparison 'twixt sire and son.

SAUL, ABNER.

Ab. What meditation holds thee thus engag'd,
O king! and keeps thine active spirit bound;
When busy war far other cares demands
Than ruminating thought and pale despair?

Saul. Abner, draw near. My weary soul sinks down
Beneath the heavy pressure of misfortune.

* 1 Samuel, xiv.

Oh for that spirit which inflam'd my breast
With sudden fervour, when among the seers
And holy sages my prophetic voice
Was heard attentive, and th' astonish'd throng,
Wond'ring, exclaim'd, — "Is Saul among the prophets?"
Where's that bold arm which quell'd th' Amalekite,
And nobly spar'd fierce Agag and his flocks?
'Tis past! the light of Israel now is quench'd:
Shorn of his beams, my sun of glory sets!
Rise Moab, Edom, angry Ammon rise!
Come Gaza, Ashdod come! let Ekron boast,
And Askelon rejoice for Saul is — nothing.

Ab. I bring thee news, O king!

Saul. My valiant uncle!
What can avail thy news? A soul oppress'd
Refuses still to hear the charmer's voice,
Howe'er enticingly he charms. What news
Can sooth my sickly soul, while Gath's fell giant
Repeats each morning to my frighten'd hosts
His daring challenge, none accepting it?

Ab. It is accepted.

Saul. Ha! by whom? how, when?
What prince, what gen'ral, what illustrious hero,
What vet'ran chief, what warrior of renown,
Will dare to meet the haughty foe's defiance?
Speak, my brave gen'ral! noble Abner, speak!

Ab. No prince, no warrior, no illustrious chief,
No vet'ran hero dares accept the challenge;
But what will move thy wonder, mighty king,
One train'd to peaceful deeds, and new to arms,
A simple shepherd swain!

Saul. Oh mockery!
No more of this slight tale, it suits but ill
Thy bearded gravity; or rather tell it
To credulous age, or weak believing women:
They love whate'er is marvellous, and doat
On deeds prodigious and incredible,
Which sober sense rejects. I laugh to think
Of thy extravagance. A shepherd's boy
Encounter him whom nations dread to meet!
Ab. Is valour, then, peculiar to high birth?
If Heav'n had so decreed, know, scornful king,
That Saul the Benjamite had never reign'd.
No: glory darts her soul-pervading ray
On thrones and cottages, regardless still
Of all the artificial, nice distinctions
Vain human customs make.
Saul. Where is this youth?
Ab. Without thy tent he waits. Such humble sweetness,
Fir'd with the secret conscience of desert;
Such manly bearing, temper'd with such softness,
And so adorn'd with ev'ry outward charm
Of graceful form and feature, saw I never.
Saul. Bring me the youth.
Ab. He waits thy royal pleasure.
[*Exit* ABNER.
Saul. What must I think? Abner himself is brave,
And skill'd in human kind: nor does he judge
So lightly, to be caught with specious words
And fraud's smooth artifice, were there not marks
Of worth intrinsic. But, behold, he comes,

The youth, too, with him! Justly did he praise
The candour which adorns his open brow.

Re-enter ABNER *and* DAVID.

Dav. Hail, mighty king!
Ab. Behold thy proffer'd champion!
Saul. Art thou the youth, whose high heroic zeal
Aspires to meet the giant son of Anak?
Dav. If so the king permit.
Saul. Impossible!
Why, what experience has thy youth of arms?
Where, stripling, didst *thou* learn the trade of war?
Beneath what hoary vet'ran hast *thou* serv'd?
What feats hast *thou* achiev'd, what daring deeds?
What well-rang'd phalanx; say, what charging hosts,
What hard campaigns, what sieges hast thou seen?
Hast thou e'er scal'd the city's rampir'd wall,
Or hurl'd the missile dart, or learn'd to poise
The warrior's deathful spear? The use of targe,
Of helm, and buckler, is to thee unknown.
Dav. Arms I have seldom seen. I little know
Of war's proud discipline. The trumpet's clang,
The shock of charging hosts, the rampir'd wall,
Th' embattled phalanx, and the warrior's spear,
The use of targe and helm to me is new.
My zeal for God, my patriot love of Israel,
My rev'rence for my king, behold my claims!
Saul. But, gentle youth, thou hast no fame in arms.
Renown, with her shrill clarion, never bore
Thy honour'd name to many a land remote;
From the fair regions where Euphrates laves
Assyria's borders, to the distant Nile.

Dav. True, mighty king! I am, indeed, alike
Unblest by fortune and to fame unknown;
A lowly shepherd swain of Judah's tribe:
But greatness ever springs from low beginnings.
That very Nile thou mention'st, whose broad stream
Bears fruitfulness and health through many a clime,
From an unknown, penurious, scanty source
Took its first rise. The forest oak, which shades
Thy sultry troops in many a toilsome march,
Once an unheeded acorn lay. O king!
Who ne'er begins can never aught achieve
Of glorious. Thou thyself wast once unknown,
Till fair occasion brought thy worth to light.
Far higher views inspire my youthful heart
Than human praise: I seek to vindicate
Th' insulted honour of the God I serve.

Ab. 'Tis nobly said.

Saul. I love thy spirit, youth:
But dare not trust thy inexperienc'd arm
Against a giant's might. The sight of blood,
Though brave thou feel'st when peril is not nigh,
Will pale thy ardent cheek.

Dav. Not so, O king!
This youthful arm has been imbru'd in blood,
Though yet no blood of man has ever stain'd it.
Thy servant's occupation is a shepherd.
With jealous care I watch'd my father's flock:
A brindled lion and a furious bear
Forth from the thicket rush'd upon the fold,
Seiz'd a young lamb, and tore their bleating spoil.
Urg'd by compassion for my helpless charge,
I felt a new-born vigour nerve my arm;

And, eager, on the foaming monsters rush'd:
The famish'd lion by his grisly beard,
Enrag'd, I caught, and smote him to the ground.
The panting monster, struggling in my gripe,
Shook terribly his bristling mane, and lash'd
His own gaunt, gory sides; fiercely he ground
His gnashing teeth, and roll'd his starting eyes,
Bloodshot with agony; then, with a groan
That wak'd the echoes of the mountain, died.
Nor did his grim associate 'scape my arm;
Thy servant slew the lion and the bear;
I kill'd them both, and bore their shaggy spoils
In triumph home: and shall I fear to meet
Th' uncircumcis'd Philistine? No: that God
Who sav'd me from the bear's destructive fang,
And hungry lion's jaw, will not he save me
From this idolater?

Saul. He will, he will!
Go, noble youth! be valiant and be blest!
The God thou serv'st will shield thee in the fight,
And nerve thy arm with more than mortal strength.

Ab. So the bold Nazarite* a lion slew:
An earnest of his victories o'er Philistia!

Saul. Go, Abner; see the youth be well equipp'd
With shield and spear. Be it thy care to grace him
With all the fit accoutrements of war:
The choicest mail from my rich armory take,
And gird upon his thigh my own tried sword,
Of noblest temper'd steel.

Ab. I shall obey.

* Samson. See Judges, chap. xiv.

Dav. Pardon, O king! the coat of plaited mail
These limbs have never known; it would not shield,
'Twould but encumber one who never felt
The weight of armour.
Saul. Take thy wish, my son!
Thy sword then, and the God of Jacob, guard thee!

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART IV.

SCENE — *Another Part of the Camp.*

DAVID (*kneeling*).

ETERNAL Justice! in whose awful scale
Th' event of battle hangs! Eternal Truth!
Whose beam illumines all! Eternal Mercy!
If, by thy attributes I may, unblam'd,
Address thee; Lord of Glory! hear me now:
Oh teach these hands to war, these arms to fight!
Thou ever present help in time of need!
Let thy broad mercy, as a shield, defend,
And let thine everlasting arms support me!
Strong in thy strength, in thy protection safe.
Then, though the heathen rage, I shall not fear.
JEHOVAH, be my buckler! Mighty Lord!
Thou who hast deign'd by humble instruments
To manifest the wonders of thy might,
Be present with me now! 'Tis thine own cause!
Thy wisdom sees events, thy goodness plans
Schemes baffling our conceptions — and 'tis still
Omnipotence which executes the deed
Of high design, though by a feeble arm!
I feel a secret impulse drive me on;

And my soul springs impatient for the fight!
'Tis not the heated spirits, or warm blood
Of sanguine youth with which my bosom burns;
And, though I thirst to meet th' insulting foe,
And pant for glory, 'tis not, witness Heav'n!
'Tis not the sinful lust of fading fame,
The perishable praise of mortal man;
His praise I covet, whose applause is Life.

DAVID, ELIAB, ISRAELITES.

El. What do I hear? thou truant! thou hast dar'd
E'en to the awful presence of the king
Bear thy presumption!
Dav. He who fears the Lord
Shall boldly stand before the face of kings,
And shall not be asham'd.
El. But what wild dream
Has urg'd thee to this deed of desperate rashness!
Thou mean'st, so I have learnt, to meet Goliath,
His single arm to thine.
Dav. 'Tis what I purpose,
E'en on this spot. Each moment I expect
His wish'd approach.
El. Go home; return, for shame!
Nor madly draw destruction on thy head.
Thy doating father, when thy shepherd's coat,
Drench'd in thy blood, is brought him, will lament,
And rend his furrow'd cheek, and silver hair,
As if some mighty loss had touch'd his age:
And mourn, ev'n as the partial patriarch mourn'd,
When Joseph's bloody garment he receiv'd
From his less dear, not less deserving sons.

But whence that glitt'ring ornament which hangs
Useless upon thy thigh?
Dav. 'Tis the king's gift.
But thou art right; it suits not me, my brother!
Nor sword I mean to use, nor spear to poise,
Lest men should say I put my trust in arms,
Not in the Lord of Hosts.
El. Then thou indeed
Art bent to seek thy death?
Dav. And what is death?
Is it so terrible to die, my brother?
Or grant it terrible, is it for that
The less inevitable? If, indeed,
We could by stratagem elude the blow,
When some high duty calls us forth to die,
And thus for ever shun it, and escape
The universal lot, — then fond self-love,
Then cautious prudence, boldly might produce
Their fine-spun arguments, their learn'd harangues,
Their cobweb arts, their phrase sophistical,
Their subtle doubts, and all the specious trick
Of selfish cunning lab'ring for its end.
But since, howe'er protracted, death will come,
Why fondly study, with ingenious pains,
To put it off! — To breathe a little longer
Is to defer our fate, but not to shun it.
Small gain! which Wisdom with indiff'rent eye
Beholds. Why wish to drink the bitter dregs
Of life's exhausted chalice, whose last runnings,
E'en at the best, are vapid? Why not die
(If Heav'n so will) in manhood's op'ning bloom,
When all the flush of life is gay about us;

When sprightly youth, with many a new-born joy,
Solicits every sense? So may we then
Present a sacrifice, unmeet, indeed,
(Ah, how unmeet!) but less unworthy far,
Than the world's leavings; than a worn-out heart,
By vice enfeebled, and by vain desires
Sunk and exhausted!

El. Hark! I hear a sound
Of multitudes approaching!

Dav. 'Tis the giant!
I see him not, but hear his measur'd pace.

El. Look, where his pond'rous shield is borne before him!

Dav. Like a broad moon its ample disk protends.
But soft! — what unknown prodigy appears?
A moving mountain cas'd in polish'd brass!

El. [*getting behind* DAVID.] How's this? thou dost not tremble. Thy firm joints
Betray no fear; thy accents are not broken;
Thy cheek retains its red; thine eye its lustre!
He comes more near! Dost thou not fear him now?

Dav. No.
The vast colossal statue nor inspires
Respect nor fear. Mere magnitude of form,
Without proportion'd intellect and valour,
Strikes not my soul with rev'rence or with awe.

El. Near and more near he comes! I hold it rash
To stay so near him, and expose a life
Which may hereafter serve the state. Farewell.

[*Exit.*

[GOLIATH *advances clad in complete armour. One bearing his shield precedes him. The opposing armies are seen at a distance, drawn up on each side of the valley.* GOLIATH *begins to speak before he comes on.* DAVID *stands in the same place with an air of indifference.*]

Gol. Where is the mighty man of war, who dares,
Accept the challenge of Philistia's chief?
What victor king, what gen'ral drench'd in blood,
Claims this high privilege? What are his rights?
What proud credentials does the boaster bring
To prove his claim? What cities laid in ashes?
What ruin'd provinces? What slaughter'd realms?
What heads of heroes, and what hearts of kings,
In battle kill'd, or at his altars slain,
Has he to boast? Is his bright armoury
Thick set with spears and swords, and coats of mail
Of vanquish'd nations, by his single arm
Subdued? Where is the mortal man so bold,
So much a wretch, so out of love with life,
To dare the weight of this uplifted spear,
Which never fell innoxious? Yet I swear,
I grudge the glory to his parting soul
To fall by this right hand. 'Twill sweeten death,
To know he had the honour to contend
With the dread son of Anak. Latest time
From blank oblivion shall retrieve *his* name
Who dar'd to perish in unequal fight
With Gath's triumphant champion. Come, advance.
Philistia's gods to Israel's. Sound, my herald —
Sound for the battle straight.

[*Herald sounds the trumpet.*

Dav. .. Behold thy foe!
Gol. I see him not.
Dav. Behold him here!
Gol. Say, where!
Direct my sight. I do not war with boys.
Dav. I stand prepar'd: thy single arm to mine.
Gol. Why this is mockery, minion! it may chance
To cost thee dear. Sport not with things above thee!
But tell me who of all this num'rous host
Expects his death from me? Which is the man
Whom Israel sends to meet my bold defiance?
Dav. Th' election of my sov'reign falls on me.
Gol. On thee! on thee! By Dagon, 'tis too much,
Thou curled minion! thou a nation's champion!
'Twould move my mirth at any other time;
But trifling's out of tune. Begone, light boy!
And tempt me not too far.
Dav. I do defy thee,
Thou foul idolater! Hast thou not scorn'd
The armies of the living God I serve?
By me he will avenge upon thy head
Thy nation's sins and thine. Arm'd with his name,
Unshrinking, I dare meet the stoutest foe
That ever bath'd his hostile spear in blood.
Gol. [*ironically.*] Indeed! 'tis wondrous well. Now, by my gods,
The stripling plays the orator! Vain boy!
Keep close to that same bloodless war of words,
And thou shalt still be safe. Tongue-valiant warrior!
Where is thy sylvan crook, with garlands hung
Of idle field-flowers? Where thy wanton harp?
Thou dainty-finger'd hero! Better strike

Its notes lascivious, or the lulling lute
Touch softly, than provoke the trumpet's rage.
I will not stain the honour of my spear
With thy inglorious blood. Shall that fair cheek
Be scarr'd with wounds unseemly? Rather go
And hold fond dalliance with the Syrian maids;
To wanton measures dance, and let them braid
The bright luxuriance of thy golden hair;
They for their lost Adonis may mistake
Thy dainty form.

Dav. Peace, thou unhallow'd railer!
Oh, tell it not in Gath, nor let the sound
Reach Askelon, how once your slaughter'd lords
By mighty Samson * found one common grave,
When his broad shoulders the firm pillars heav'd,
And to its base the tott'ring fabric shook.

Gol. Insulting boy! perhaps thou hast not heard
The infamy of that inglorious day,
When your weak hosts at Eben-ezer † pitch'd
Their quick-abandon'd tents? Then, when your ark,
Your talisman, your charm, your boasted pledge
Of safety and success, was tamely lost:
And yet not tamely, since by me 'twas won.
When with this good right arm I thinn'd your ranks,
And bravely crush'd, beneath a single blow,
The chosen guardians of this vaunted shrine,
Hophni ‡ and Phineas. The fam'd ark itself
I bore to Ashdod.

* Judges, xvi. † 1 Samuel, v.

‡ Commentators say, that the Chaldee Paraphrase makes Goliath boast that he had killed Hophni and Phineas, and taken the ark prisoner.

Dav. .. I remember, too,
Since thou provok'st th' unwelcome truth, how all
Your blushing priests beheld their idol's shame;
When prostrate Dagon fell before the ark,
And your frail god was shiver'd. Then Philistia,
Idolatrous Philistia, flew for succour
To Israel's help, and all her smitten nobles
Confess'd the Lord was God; and the blest ark,
Gladly, with reverential awe restor'd.

Gol. By Ashdod's fane thou ly'st. Nor will I meet thee,
Thou insect warrior, since thou dar'st me thus!
Already I behold thy mangled limbs,
Dissever'd each from each, ere long to feed
The fierce blood-snuffing vulture. Mark me well,
Around my spear I'll twist thy shining locks,
And toss in air thy head all gash'd with wounds,
Thy lip yet quiv'ring with the dire convulsion
Of recent death! — Art thou not terrified?

Dav. No:
True courage is not mov'd by breath of words:
While the rash bravery of boiling blood,
Impetuous, knows no settled principle.
A fev'rish tide, it has its ebbs and flows,
As spirits rise or fall, as wine inflames,
Or circumstances change: but inborn courage,
The gen'rous child of Fortitude and Faith,
Holds its firm empire in the constant soul;
And like the steadfast pole-star, never once
From the same fix'd and faithful point declines.

Gol. The curses of Philistia's gods be on thee!
This fine-drawn speech is meant to lengthen out
That little life thy words pretend to scorn.

Dav. Ha! say'st thou so? Come on, then. Mark
us well.
Thou com'st to me with sword, and spear, and
shield: —
In the dread name of Israel's God I come;
The living Lord of Hosts, whom thou defiest!
Yet though no shield I bring, no arms except
These five smooth stones I gather'd from the brook,
With such a simple sling as shepherds use —
Yet all expos'd, defenceless as I am,
The God I serve shall give thee up a prey
To my victorious arm. This day I mean
To make th' uncircumcised tribes confess
There is a God in Israel. I will give thee,
Spite of thy vaunted strength and giant bulk,
To glut the carrion kites. Nor thee alone:
The mangled carcasses of your thick hosts
Shall spread the plains of Elah, till Philistia,
Through all her trembling tents and flying bands,
Shall own that Judah's God is God indeed!
— I dare thee to the trial.
Gol. Follow me —
In this good spear I trust.
Dav. I trust in Heav'n!
The God of battle stimulates my arm,
And fires my soul with ardour not its own.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART V.

SCENE — *The Tent of Saul.*

SAUL (*rising from his couch*).

OH! that I knew the black and midnight arts
Of wizard sorcery! that I could call
The slumb'ring spirit from the shades of hell!
Or, like Chaldean sages, could foreknow
Th' event of things unacted! I might then
Anticipate my fortune. How I'm fall'n!
The sport of vain chimeras, the weak slave
Of Fear and Fancy; coveting to know
The arts obscene, which foul diviners use.
Thick blood and moping melancholy lead
To baleful Superstition — that fell fiend,
Whose with'ring charms blast the fair bloom of virtue.
Why did my wounded pride with scorn reject
The wholesome truths which holy Samuel told me?
Why drive him from my presence? he might now
Raise my sunk soul, and my benighted mind
Enlighten with religion's cheering ray.
He dar'd to menace me with loss of empire;
And I, for that bold honesty, dismiss'd him.
" Another shall possess thy throne," he cry'd:

" A stranger!" This unwelcome prophecy
Has lin'd my crown and strew'd my couch with thorns.
Each ray of op'ning merit I discern
In friend or foe, distracts my troubled soul,
Lest he should prove my rival. But this morn,
E'en my young champion, lovely as he look'd
In blooming valour, struck me to the soul
With Jealousy's barb'd dart. O Jealousy,
Thou ugliest fiend of hell! thy deadly venom
Preys on my vitals, turns the healthful hue
Of my fresh cheek to haggard sallowness,
And drinks my spirit up!
[*A flourish of trumpets, shouting, &c.*
What sounds are those?
The combat is decided. Hark! again,
Those shouts proclaim it! Now, O God of Jacob,
If yet thou hast not quite withdrawn from Saul,
Thy light and favour prosper me this once!
But Abner comes! I dread to hear his tale!
Fair Hope, with smiling face but ling'ring foot,
Has long deceiv'd me.
Ab. King of Israel, hail!
Now thou art King indeed. The youth has conquer'd:
Goliath's dead.
Saul. Oh speak thy tale again,
Lest my fond ears deceive me!
Ab. Thy young champion
Has slain the giant.
Saul. Then God is gracious still,
In spite of my offences! But, good Abner!
How was it? Tell me all. Where is my champion?

Quick let me press him to my grateful heart,
And pay him a king's thanks. And yet, who knows,
This forward friend may prove an active foe?
No more of that. Tell me the whole, brave Abner!
And paint the glorious acts of my young hero!
Ab. Full in the centre of the camp they stood!
Th' opposing armies rang'd on either side
In proud array. The haughty giant stalk'd,
Stately across the valley. Next, the youth
With modest confidence advanc'd. Nor pomp,
Nor gay parade, nor martial ornament,
His graceful form adorn'd. Goliath straight,
With solemn state, began the busy work
Of dreadful preparation. In one place
His closely jointed mail an op'ning left
For air, and only one: the watchful youth
Mark'd that the beaver of his helm was up.
Meanwhile the giant such a blow devis'd
As would have crush'd him. This the youth perceiv'd,
And from his well-directed sling quick hurl'd,
With dext'rous aim, a stone, which sunk, deep lodg'd,
In the capacious forehead of the foe.
Then with a cry, as loud and terrible
As Libyan lions roaring for their young,
Quite stunn'd, the furious giant stagger'd, reel'd,
And fell: the mighty mass of man fell prone.
With its own weight his shatter'd bulk was bruis'd.
His clatt'ring arms rang dreadful through the field,
And the firm basis of the solid earth
Shook. Chok'd with blood and dust, he curst his gods,

And died blaspheming! Straight the victor youth
Drew from its sheath the giant's pond'rous sword,
And from th' enormous trunk the gory head
Furious in death he sever'd. The grim visage
Look'd threat'ning still, and still frown'd horribly.

Saul. O glorious deed! O valiant conqueror!

Ab. The youth so calm appear'd, so nobly firm,
So cool, yet so intrepid, that these eyes
Ne'er saw such temp'rate valour so chastis'd
By modesty.

Saul. Thou dwell'st upon his praise
With needless circumstance. 'Twas nobly done;
But others too have fought!

Ab. None, none, so bravely.

Saul. What follow'd next?

Ab. The shouting Israelites
On the Philistines rush'd, and still pursued
Their routed remnants. In dismay, their bands
Disorder'd fly, while shouts of loud acclaim
Pursue their brave deliverer. Lo, he comes!
Bearing the giant's head and shining sword,
His well-earn'd trophies.

SAUL, ABNER, DAVID.

[DAVID *bearing* GOLIATH's *head and sword. He kneels, and lays both at* SAUL's *feet.*]

Saul. Welcome to my heart,
My glorious champion! My deliverer, welcome!
How shall I speak the swelling gratitude
Of my full heart! or give thee the high praise
Thy gallant deeds deserve!

Dav. ... O mighty king!
Sweet is the breath of praise when giv'n by those
Whose own high merit claims the praise they give.
But let not this one prosperous event,
By Heaven directed, be ascrib'd to me:
I might have fought with equal skill and courage,
And not have gain'd this conquest; then had shame,
Harsh obloquy, and foul disgrace befall'n me;
But prosp'rous fortune gains the praise of valour.
Saul. I like not this. In every thing superior
He soars above me (*aside*).—Modest youth, thou'rt right;
And fortune, as thou say'st, deserves the praise
We give to human valour.
Dav. Rather say
The God of Hosts deserves it.
Saul. Tell me, youth,
What is thy name, and what thy father's house?
Dav. My name is David; Jesse is my sire:
An humble Bethle'mite of Judah's tribe.
Saul. David, the son of Jesse! sure that name
Has been familiar to me. Nay, thy voice,
Thy form, and features, I remember too,
Though faint and indistinctly.
Ab. In this hero
Behold thy sweet musician; he whose harp
Expell'd the melancholy fiend, whose pow'r
Enslav'd thy spirit.
Saul. This the modest youth
Whom for his skill and virtues I preferr'd
To bear my armour?

Dav. I am he, O King!
Saul. Why this concealment? tell me, valiant David?
Why didst thou hide thy birth and name till now?
Dav. O king! I would not aught from favour claim,
Or on remember'd services presume;
But on the strength of my own actions stand,
Ungrac'd and unsupported.
Ab. Well he merits
The honours which await him. Why, O king,
Dost thou delay to bless his doubting heart
With his well earn'd rewards? Thy lovely daughter,
By right of conquest his!
Saul [*to* DAVID]. True: thou hast won her.
She shall be thine. Yes, a king's word is pass'd.
Dav. O boundless blessing! What! shall she be mine,
For whom contending monarchs might renounce
Their slighted crowns?
[*Sounds of musical instruments heard at a distance. Shouting and singing. A grand procession. Chorus of Hebrew women.*]
Saul. How's this? what sounds of joy
Salute my ears? What means this needless pomp?
This merry sound of tabret and of harp?
What mean these idle instruments of triumph?
These women, who in fair procession move,
Making sweet melody?
Ab. To pay due honour
To David are they come.
Saul [*aside*]. A rival's praise

Is discord to my ear! They might have spar'd
This idle pageantry; it wounds my soul!

[*Martial symphony: after which, Chorus of Women singing.*]

I.

PREPARE! your festal rites prepare!
Let your triumphs rend the air!
Idol gods shall reign no more:
We the living Lord adore!
Let heathen hosts on human helps repose,
Since Israel's God has routed Israel's foes.

II.

Let remotest nations know
Proud Goliath's overthrow.
Fall'n, Philistia, is thy trust,
Dagon mingles with the dust!
Who fears the Lord of Glory, need not fear
The brazen armour or the lifted spear.

III.

See, the routed squadrons fly!
Hark! their clamours rend the sky!
Blood and carnage stain the field!
See, the vanquish'd nations yield;
Dismay and terror fill the frighten'd land,
While conqu'ring David routs the trembling band.

IV.

Lo! upon the tented field
Royal Saul has thousands kill'd!
Lo! upon th' ensanguin'd plain
David has ten thousands slain!
Let mighty Saul his vanquish'd thousands tell,
While tenfold triumphs David's victories swell.

BELSHAZZAR:

A

Sacred Drama.

How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning!
How art thou cut down to the ground, who didst weaken the nations!

ISAIAH.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

BELSHAZZAR, King of Babylon.
NITOCRIS, the Queen-Mother.
Courtiers, Astrologers, Parasites.

DANIEL, the Jewish Prophet.
Captive Jews, &c.

SCENE — *Babylon.* TIME — *Night.*

The Subject is taken from the Fifth Chapter of the Prophet Daniel.

BELSHAZZAR.

PART I.

SCENE — *Near the Palace of Babylon.*

DANIEL *and* CAPTIVE JEWS.

Dan. PARENT of Life and Light! Sole source of Good!
Whose tender mercies through the tide of time,
In long successive order have sustain'd,
And sav'd the sons of Israel! Thou, whose pow'r
Deliver'd righteous Noah from the flood,
The whelming flood, the grave of human kind!
O Thou, whose guardian care and out-stretch'd hand
Rescu'd young Isaac from the lifted arm,
Rais'd, at thy bidding, to devote a son,
An only son, doom'd by his sire to die:
(O saving faith, by such obedience prov'd;
O blest obedience, hallow'd thus by faith!)
Thou, who in mercy sav'd'st the chosen race
In the wild desert, and didst there sustain them
By wonder-working love, though they rebell'd
And murmur'd at the miracles that sav'd them!
Oh, hear thy servant Daniel! hear and help!
Thou, whose almighty pow'r did after raise
Successive leaders to defend our race:

Who sentest valiant Joshua to the field,
Thy people's champion, to the conqu'ring field,
Where the revolving planet of the night,
Suspended in her radiant round, was stay'd,
And the bright sun, arrested in his course,
Stupendously stood still!

CHORUS OF JEWS.

I.

What ailed thee, that thou stood'st still,
O Sun! nor did thy flaming orb decline!
And thou, O Moon! in Ajalon's low vale,
Why didst thou long before thy period shine?

II.

Was it at Joshua's dread command,
The leader of the Israelitish band?
Yes — at a mortal bidding both stood still;
'Twas Joshua's word, but 'twas Jehovah's will.

III.

What all-controlling hand had force
To stop eternal Nature's constant course?
The wand'ring moon to one fix'd spot confine,
But His whose fiat gave them first to shine?

Dan. O Thou! who, when thy discontented host,
Tir'd of Jehovah's rule, desir'd a king,
In anger gav'st them Saul; and then again
Didst wrest the regal sceptre from his hand
To give it David — David best belov'd!

Illustrious David! poet, prophet, king;
Thou who didst suffer Solomon the wise
To build a glorious temple to thy name,—
Oh, hear thy servants, and forgive us too!
If by severe necessity compell'd,
We worship here — we have no temple now:
Altar or sanctuary, none is left.

CHORUS OF JEWS.

O JUDAH! let thy captive sons deplore
Thy far fam'd temple's now no more!
Fall'n is thy sacred fane, thy glory gone!
Fall'n is thy temple, Solomon!
Ne'er did Barbaric kings behold,
With all their shining gems, their burnish'd gold,
A fane so perfect, bright, and fair;
For God himself was wont t' inhabit there.
Between the cherubim his glory stood,
While the high-priest alone the dazzling splendour view'd.

How fondly did the Tyrian artist strive
His name to latest times should live!
Such wealth the stranger wonder'd to behold:
Gold were the tablets, and the vases gold.
Of cedar such an ample store,
Exhausted Lebanon could yield no more.
Bending before the Ruler of the sky,
Well might the royal founder cry,
Fill'd with a holy dread, a rev'rend fear,
Will God in very deed inhabit here?

The heav'n of heav'ns beneath his feet,
Is for the bright inhabitant unmeet:
Archangels prostrate wait his high commands,
And will he deign to dwell in temples made with hands?

Dan. Yes, Thou art ever present, Pow'r Supreme!
Not circumscrib'd by time, nor fix'd to space,
Confin'd to altars, nor to temples bound.
In wealth, in want, in freedom, or in chains,
In dungeons, or on thrones, the faithful find thee!
E'en in the burning cauldron thou wast near
To Shadrach and the holy brotherhood:
The unhurt martyrs bless'd thee in the flames;
They sought and found Thee; call'd, and Thou wast there.

1st Jew. How chang'd our state! Judah, thy glory's fall'n,
Thy joys for hard captivity exchang'd;
And thy sad sons breathe the polluted air
Of Babylon, where deities obscene
Insult the living God; and to his servants,
The priests of wretched idols made with hands
Show contumelious scorn.

Dan. 'Tis Heav'n's high will.

2d Jew. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem!
If I not fondly cherish thy lov'd image,
E'en in the giddy hour of thoughtless mirth:
If I not rather view thy prostrate walls
Than haughty Babylon's imperial tow'rs,—
Then may my tongue refuse to frame the strains
Of sweetest harmony; my rude right hand

Forget, with sounds symphonious, to accord
The harp of Jesse's son to Sion's songs.

1st Jew. Oft on Euphrates' ever verdant banks,
Where drooping willows form a mournful shade,
With all the pride which prosp'rous fortunes give,
And all th' unfeeling mirth of happy men,
Th' insulting Babylonians ask a song;
Such songs as erst in better days were sung,
By Korah's sons, or heav'n-taught Asaph set
To loftiest measures: then our bursting hearts
Feel all their woes afresh: the galling chain
Of bondage crushes then the free-born soul
With writhing anguish; from the trembling lip
Th' unfinish'd cadence falls; and the big tear,
While it relieves, betrays the woe-fraught soul.
For who can view Euphrates' pleasant stream,
Its drooping willows, and it verdant banks,
And not to wounded memory recall
The piny groves of fertile Palestine,
The vales of Solyma, and Jordan's stream?

Dan. Firm faith and deep submission to high Heav'n
Will teach us to endure, without a murmur,
What seems so hard. Think what the holy host
Of patriarchs, saints, and prophets have sustain'd
In the blest cause of truth! And shall not we,
O men of Judah, dare what these have dar'd,
And boldly pass through the refining fire
Of fierce affliction? Yes, be witness, Heav'n!
Old as I am, I will not shrink at death,
Come in what shape it may, if God so will,
By peril to confirm and prove my faith.

Oh! I would dare yon den of hungry lions,
Rather than pause to fill the task assign'd
By Wisdom Infinite. Nor think I boast,
Not in myself, but in thy strength I trust,
Spirit of God!

1st Jew. Prophet, thy words support
And raise our sinking souls.

Dan. Behold yon palace;
There proud Belshazzar keeps his wanton court!
I knew it once beneath another lord,
His grandsire *, who subdu'd Jehoiachin,
And hither brought sad Judah's captive tribes:
And with them brought the rich and precious relics
Of our fam'd Temple; all the holy treasure,
The golden vases, and the sacred cups,
Which grac'd, in happier times, the sanctuary.

2d Jew. May He, to whose blest use they were devoted,
Preserve them from pollution; and once more,
In his own gracious time, restore the Temple!

Dan. I, with some favour'd youths of Jewish race,
Was lodg'd in the king's palace, and instructed
In all the various learning of the East;
But He, on whose great name our fathers call'd,
Preserv'd us from the perils of a court,
Warn'd us to guard our youthful appetites,
And still with holy fortitude reject
The pamp'ring viands luxury presented;
Fell luxury! more perilous to youth
Than storms or quicksands, poverty or chains.

* Nebuchadnezzar.

2d Jew. He who can guard 'gainst the low baits of sense,
Will find Temptation's arrows hurtless strike
Against the brazen shield of Temperance.
For 'tis th' inferior appetites enthrall
The man, and quench th' immortal light within him;
The senses take the soul an easy prey,
And sink th' imprison'd spirit into brute.

Dan. Twice *, by the spirit of God, did I expound
The visions of the king; his soul was touch'd,
And twice did he repent, and prostrate fall
Before the God of Daniel: yet again,
Pow'r, flatt'ry, and prosperity, undid him,
When from the lofty ramparts of his palace
He view'd the splendours of the royal city,
That magazine of wealth, which proud Euphrates
Wafts from each distant corner of the earth;
When he beheld the adamantine tow'rs,
The brazen gates, the bulwarks of his strength,
The pendant gardens, Art's stupendous work,
The wonder of the world! the proud Chaldean,
Mad with the intoxicating fumes which rise
When uncontroul'd ambition grasps at once
Dominion absolute, and boundless wealth,
Forgot he was a man, forgot his God!
" This mighty Babylon is mine," he cry'd:
" *My* wondrous pow'r, *my* godlike arm achiev'd it.
" I scorn submission; own no Deity
" Above my own." — While the blasphemer spoke,
The wrath of Heav'n inflicted instant vengeance:
Stripp'd him of that bright reason he abus'd,

* Daniel, chap. ii. and v.

And drove him from the cheerful haunts of men,
A naked, wretched, helpless, senseless thing;
Companion of the brutes, his equals now.
1st Jew. Nor does his impious grandson, proud Belshazzar,
Fall short of his offences; nay, he wants
The valiant spirit and the active soul
Of his progenitor; for Pleasure's slave,
Though bound in silken chains, and only tied
In flow'ry fetters, seeming light and loose,
Is more subdu'd than the rash casual victim
Of anger or ambition; these, indeed,
Burn with a fiercer but a short-liv'd fire;
While Pleasure with a constant flame consumes.
War slays her thousands, but destructive Pleasure,
More fell, more fatal, her ten thousands slays:
The young luxurious king she fondly woos
In ev'ry shape of am'rous blandishment;
With adulation smooth ensnares his soul;
With love betrays him, and with wine inflames.
She strews her magic poppies o'er his couch,
And with delicious opiates charms him down,
In fatal slumbers bound. Though Babylon
Is now invested by the warlike troops
Of royal Cyrus, Persia's valiant prince;
Who, in conjunction with the Median king,
Darius, fam'd for conquest, now prepares
To storm the city: not th' impending horrors
Which ever wait a siege have pow'r to wake
To thought or sense th' intoxicated king.
Dan. E'en in this night of universal dread,
A mighty army threat'ning at the gates;

This very night, as if in scorn of danger,
The dissolute Belshazzar holds a feast
Magnificently impious, meant to honour
Belus, the fav'rite Babylonish idol.
Lewd parasites compose his wanton court,
Whose impious flatt'ries soothe his monstrous crimes;
They justify his vices, and extol
His boastful phrase, as if he were some god.
Whate'er he says, they say: what he commands,
Implicitly they do; they echo back
His blasphemies with shouts of loud acclaim;
And when he wounds the tortur'd ear of Virtue,
They cry, "All hail! Belshazzar, live for ever!"
To-night a thousand nobles fill his hall,
Princes, and all the dames who grace the court:
All but his virtuous mother, sage Nitocris:
Ah! how unlike the impious king, her son!
She never mingles in the midnight fray,
Nor crowns the guilty banquet with her presence.
The royal fair is rich in ev'ry virtue
Which can adorn the queen, or grace the woman.
But for the wisdom of her prudent counsels
This wretched empire had been long undone.
Not fam'd Semiramis, Assyria's pride,
Could boast a brighter mind or firmer soul;
Beneath the gentle reign of Merodach *,
Her royal lord, our nation tasted peace.
Our captive monarch, sad Jehoiachin,
Grown grey in a close prison's horrid gloom,
He freed from bondage; brought the hoary king
To taste once more the long-forgotten sweets

* 2 Kings, chap. xxv.

Of liberty and light, sustain'd his age,
Pour'd in his wounds the lenient balm of kindness,
And blest his setting hour of life with peace.

[*Sound of trumpets is heard at a distance.*

1*st Jew.* That sound proclaims the banquet is begun.

2*d Jew.* Hark! the licentious uproar grows more loud,
The vaulted roof resounds with shouts of mirth,
And the firm palace shakes! Retire, my friends!
This madness is not meet for sober ears.
If any of our race were found so near,
'Twould but expose us to the rude attack
Of ribaldry obscene and impious jests
From these mad sons of Belial, more inflam'd
To deeds of riot by the wanton feast.

Dan. Here part we then! but when again to meet,
Who knows, save Heav'n? Yet, O my friends! I feel
An impulse more than human stir my breast,
Rapt in prophetic vision *, I behold
Things hid as yet from mortal sight. I see
The dart of vengeance tremble in the air,
Ere long to pierce the impious king. E'en now
The desolating angel stalks abroad,
And brandishes aloft the two-edg'd sword
Of retribution keen; he soon will strike,
And Babylon shall weep as Sion wept.
Pass but a little while, and you shall see
This queen of cities prostrate on the earth.
This haughty mistress of the kneeling world,

* See the Prophecies of Isaiah, chap. xlvii., and others.

How shall she sit dishonour'd in the dust,
In tarnish'd pomp and solitary woe!
How shall she shroud her glories in the dark,
And in opprobrious silence hide her head!
Lament, O virgin daughter of Chaldea!
For thou shalt fall! imperial queen, shalt fall!
No more Sidonian robes shall grace thy limbs.
To purple garments sackcloth shall succeed;
And sordid dust and ashes shall supply
The od'rous nard and cassia. Thou, who said'st
I AM, and there is none besides me: thou,
E'en thou, imperial Babylon, shalt fall!
Thy glory quite eclips'd! The pleasant sound
Of viol and of harp shall charm no more;
Nor song of Syrian damsels shall be heard,
Responsive to the lute's luxurious note:
But the loud bittern's cry, the raven's croak,
The bat's fell scream, the lonely owl's dull plaint,
And ev'ry hideous bird, with ominous shriek
Shall scare affrighted Silence from thy walls:
While Desolation, snatching from the hand
Of Time the scythe of ruin, sits aloft,
Or stalks in dreadful majesty abroad.
I see th' exterminating fiend advance,
E'en now I see her glare with horrid joy,
See tow'rs imperial mould'ring at her touch;
She glances on the broken battlement,
She eyes the crumbling column, and enjoys
The work of ages prostrate in the dust—
Then pointing to the mischiefs she has made,
Exulting cries, This once was Babylon!

BELSHAZZAR.

PART II.

SCENE — *The Court of Belshazzar. The king seated on a magnificent Throne. Princes, Nobles, and Attendants. Ladies of the Court. Music. — A superb Banquet.*

1st Cour. [*rises and kneels.*] HAIL, mighty king!
2d Cour. Belshazzar, live for ever!
3d Cour. Sun of the world, and light of kings, all hail!
4th Cour. With lowly rev'rence, such as best becomes
The humblest creatures of imperial power,
Behold a thousand nobles bend before thee!
Princes far fam'd, and dames of high descent!
Yet all this pride of wealth, this boast of beauty,
Shrinks into nought before thine awful eye!
And lives or dies as the king frowns or smiles!
Bel. This is such homage as becomes your love,
And suits the mighty monarch of mankind.
5th Cour. The bending world should prostrate thus before thee;
And pay not only praise but adoration!
Bel. [*rises and comes forward.*] Let dull philosophy preach self-denial;

Let envious poverty and snarling age
Proudly declaim against the joys they know not;
Let the deluded Jews, who fondly hope
Some fancied heav'n hereafter, mortify,
And lose the actual blessings of this world
To purchase others which may never come.
Our gods may promise less, but give us more.
Ill could my ardent spirit be content
With meagre abstinence and hungry hope.
Let those misjudging Israelites, who want
The nimble spirits and the active soul,
Call their blunt feelings virtue: let them drudge,
In regular progression, through the round
Of formal duty and of daily toil;
And, when they want the genius to be happy,
Believe their harsh austerity is goodness.
If there be gods, they meant we should enjoy:
Why give us else these tastes and appetites;
And why the means to crown them with indulgence?
To burst the feeble bonds which hold the vulgar
Is noble daring.

1st Cour. And is therefore worthy
The high imperial spirit of Belshazzar.

2d Cour. Behold a banquet which the gods might share!

Bel. To-night, my friends, your monarch shall be blest
With ev'ry various joy; to-night is ours;
Nor shall the envious gods, who view our bliss,
And sicken as they view, to-night disturb us.
Bring all the richest spices of the East;

The od'rous cassia and the drooping myrrh,
The liquid amber and the fragrant gums,
Rob Gilead of its balms, Belshazzar bids;
And leave th' Arabian groves without an odour.
Bring freshest flow'rs, exhaust the blooming spring,
Twine the green myrtle with the short-liv'd rose;
And ever, as the blushing garland fades,
We'll learn to snatch the fugitive delight,
And grasp the flying joy ere it escape us.
Come—fill the smiling goblet for the king;
Belshazzar will not let a moment pass
Unmark'd by some enjoyment! The full bowl
Let every guest partake!

[*Courtiers kneel and drink.*

1*st Cour.* Here's to the king!
Light of the world, and glory of the earth,
Whose word is fate!

Bel. Yes; we are likest gods
When we have pow'r, and use it. What is wealth
But the rich means to gratify desire?
I will not have a wish, a hope, a thought,
That shall not know fruition. What is empire?
The privilege to punish and enjoy;
To feel our pow'r in making others fear it;
To take of Pleasure's cup till we grow giddy,
And think ourselves immortal. This is empire!
My ancestors scarce tasted of its joys:
Shut from the sprightly world and all its charms,
In cumbrous majesty, in sullen state
And dull unsocial dignity they liv'd;
Far from the sight of an admiring world,

That world, whose gaze makes half the charms of greatness;
They nothing knew of empire but the name,
Or saw it in the looks of trembling slaves;
And all they felt of royalty was care.
But I will see and know it of myself;
Youth, Wealth, and Greatness court me to be blest,
And Pow'r and Pleasure draw with equal force
And sweet attraction: both I will embrace
In quick succession; this is Pleasure's day;
Ambition will have time to reign hereafter;
It is the proper appetite of age.
The lust of pow'r shall lord it uncontroul'd,
When all the gen'rous feelings grow obtuse,
And stern dominion holds with rigid hand
His iron rein, and sits and sways alone.
But youth is Pleasure's hour!

1st Cour. Perish the slave
Who, with officious counsel, would oppose
The king's desire, whose slightest wish is law

Bel. Now strike the loud-ton'd lyre and softer lute;
Let me have music, with the nobler aid
Of poesy. Where are those cunning men
Who boast, by chosen sounds, and measur'd sweetness,
To set the busy spirits in a flame,
And cool them at their will? who know the art
To call the hidden pow'rs of numbers forth,
And make that pliant instrument, the mind,
Yield to the pow'rful sympathy of sound,
Obedient to the master's artful hand?
Such magic is in song! Then give me song;
Yet not at first such soul-dissolving strains

As melt the soften'd sense; but such bold measures
As may inflame my spirit to despise
Th' ambitious Persian, that presumptuous boy,
Who rashly dares e'en now invest our city,
And menaces the invincible Belshazzar.

[*A grand concert of Music, after which an Ode.*]

In vain shall Persian Cyrus dare
With great Belshazzar wage unequal war:
In vain Darius shall combine,
Darius, leader of the Median line!
While fair Euphrates' stream our wall protects,
And great Belshazzar's self our fate directs.
War and famine threat in vain,
While this demigod shall reign!
Let Persia's prostrate king confess his pow'r,
And Media's monarch dread his vengeful hour.
On Dura's * ample plain behold
Immortal Belus †, whom the nations own;
Sublime he stands in burnish'd gold,
And richest offerings his bright altars crown.
To-night his deity we here adore,
And due libations speak his mighty pow'r.

* Daniel, chap. iii.

† See a very fine description of the temple of this idol.

——— The tow'ring fane
Of Bel, Chaldean Jove, surpassing far
That Doric temple, which the Elean chiefs
Rais'd to their thunderer from the spoils of war;
Or that Ionic, where th' Ephesian bow'd
To Dian, queen of heav'n. Eight towers arise,
Each above each, immeasurable height,
A monument at once of Eastern pride,
And slavish superstition, &c. *Judah Restored.*

Yet Belus' self not more we own
Than great Belshazzar on Chaldea's throne.
Great Belshazzar like a god,
Rules the nations with a nod!
To great Belshazzar be the goblet crown'd!
Belshazzar's name the echoing roofs rebound!

Bel. Enough! the kindling rapture fires my brain,
And my heart dances to the flatt'ring sounds.
I feel myself a god! Why not a god?
What were the deities our fathers worshipp'd?
What was great Nimrod our imperial founder?
What greater Belus, to whose pow'r divine
We raise to-night the banquet and the song?
But youthful heroes, mortal, like myself,
Who by their daring earn'd divinity?
They were but men: nay, some were less than men,
Though now rever'd as gods. What was Anubis,
Whom Egypt's sapient sons adore? A dog!
And shall not I, young, valiant, and a king,
Dare more? do more? exceed the boldest flights
Of my progenitors? — Fill me more wine,
To cherish and exalt the young idea! [*He drinks.*
Ne'er did Olympian Jupiter himself
Quaff such immortal draughts.

1*st Cour.* What could that Canaan,
That heav'n in hope, that nothing in possession,
That air-built bliss of the deluded Jews,
That promis'd land of milk and flowing honey;
What could that fancied Paradise bestow
To match these generous juices?

Bel. ... Hold — enough!
Thou hast rous'd a thought. By Heav'n I will enjoy it:
A glorious thought! which will exalt to rapture
The pleasures of the banquet, and bestow
A yet untasted relish of delight.

1*st Cour.* What means the king?

Bel. The Jews! saidst thou the Jews!

1*st Cour.* I spoke of that undone, that outcast people,
Those tributary creatures of thy pow'r,
The captives of thy will, whose very breath
Hangs on the sovereign pleasure of the king.

Bel. When that abandon'd race was hither brought,
Were not the choicest treasures of their Temple
(Devoted to their God, and held most precious,)
Among the spoils which grac'd Nebassar's * triumph,
And lodg'd in Babylon?

1*st Cour.* O king! they were.

2*d Cour.* The Jews, with superstitious awe, behold
The sacred symbols of their ancient faith:
Nor has captivity abated aught
The rev'rend love they bear these holy relics.
Tho' we deride their law, and scorn their persons,
Yet never have we yet to human use
Devoted these rich vessels set apart
To sacred purposes.

Bel. I joy to hear it!
Go — fetch them hither. They shall grace our banquet.
Does no one stir! Belshazzar disobey'd?

* The name of Nebuchadnezzar not being reducible to verse, I have adopted that of Nebassar, on the authority of the ingenious and learned Author of *Judah Restored.*

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And yet you live? Whence comes this strange reluctance?
This new-born rev'rence for the helpless Jews?
This fear to injure those who can't revenge it?
Send to the sacred treasury in haste.
Let all be hither brought: — who answers dies.

[*They go out.*

The mantling wine a higher joy will yield,
Pour'd from the precious flagons which adorn'd
Their far-fam'd Temple now in ashes laid.
Oh! 'twill exalt the pleasure into transport,
To gall those whining, praying Israelites!
I laugh to think what wild dismay will seize them
When they shall learn the use that has been made
Of all their holy trumpery!

[*The vessels are brought in.*

2d Cour. It comes:
A goodly show! how bright with gold and gems!
Far fitter for a youthful monarch's board
Than the cold shrine of an unheeding God.

Bel. Fill me that massy goblet to the brim.
Now, Abraham! let thy wretched race expect
The fable of their faith to be fulfill'd;
Their second Temple and their promis'd king;
Now will they see the God they vainly serve
Is impotent to help; for had he pow'r
To hear and grant their pray'r, he would prevent
This profanation.

[*As the king is going to drink, thunder is heard; he starts from the throne, spies a hand, which writes on the wall these words,* MENE, MENE, TEREL, UPHARSIN.

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He lets fall the goblet, and stands in an attitude of speechless horror. All start, and seem terrified.]

1*st Cour.* [*after a long pause.*] Oh, transcendent horror!

2*d Cour.* What may this mean? The king is greatly mov'd!

3*d Cour.* Nor is it strange — who unappall'd can view it?
Those sacred cups! I doubt we've gone too far!

1*st Cour.* Observe the fear-struck king! his starting eyes
Roll horribly. Thrice he essay'd to speak,
And thrice his tongue refus'd.

Bel. [*in a low trembling voice.*] Ye mystic words!
Thou semblance of a hand! illusive forms!
Ye wild fantastic images! what are ye?
Dread shadows, speak! Explain your dark intent!
Ye will not answer me. — Alas! I feel
I am a mortal now — my failing limbs
Refuse to bear me up. I am no god!
Gods do not tremble thus. — Support me, hold me!
These loosen'd joints, these knees which smite each other,
Betray I'm but a man — a weak one, too!

1*st Cour.* In truth 'tis passing strange, and full of horror!

Bel. Send for the learn'd magicians, every sage
Who deals in wizard spells and magic charms.
[*Some go out.*

1*st Cour.* How fares my lord the king?

Bel. Am I a king?
What pow'r have I? Ye lying slaves, I am not.
Oh, soul-distracting sight! but is it real?
Perhaps 'tis fancy all, or the wild dream
Of mad distemperature, the fumes of wine!
I'll look upon 't no more! — So — now I'm well!
I am a king again, and know not fear:
And yet my eyes will seek that fatal spot,
And fondly dwell upon the sight that blasts them!
Again, 'tis there! it is not Fancy's work,
I see it still! 'tis written on the wall!
I see the writing, but the viewless writer,
Who! what is he? Oh, horror! horror! horror!
It cannot be the God of these poor Jews:
For what is He, that He can thus afflict?

2d Cour. Let not my lord the king be thus dismay'd.

3d Cour. Let not a phantom, an illusive shade,
Disturb the peace of him who rules the world.

Bel. No more, ye wretched sycophants! no more!
The sweetest note which flatt'ry now can strike,
Harsh and discordant grates upon my soul.
Talk not of pow'r to one so full of fear,
So weak, so impotent! Look on that wall;
If thou would'st soothe my soul, explain the writing,
And thou shalt be my oracle, my god!
Oh, tell me whence it came, and what it means,
And I'll believe I am again a king!
Friends! Princes! ease my troubled breast, and say,
What do the mystic characters portend?

1st Cour. 'Tis not in us, O king, to ease thy spirit:
We are not skill'd in those mysterious arts
Which wait the midnight studies of the sage:

But of the deep diviners thou shalt learn,
The wise astrologers, the sage magicians,
Who, of events unborn, take secret note,
And hold deep commerce with the unseen world.

Enter Astrologers, Magicians, &c.

Bel. Approach, ye sages, 'tis the king commands!
[*They kneel.*

As. Hail, mighty king of Babylon!

Bel. Nay, rise:
I do not need your homage, but your help;
The world may worship, you must counsel me.
He who declares the secret of the king,
No common honours shall await his skill;
Our empire shall be tax'd for his reward,
And he himself shall name the gift he wishes.
A splendid scarlet robe shall grace his limbs,
His neck a princely chain of gold adorn:
Meet honours for such wisdom: He shall rule
The third in rank throughout our Babylon.

2d As. Such recompense becomes Belshazzar's bounty.
Let the king speak the secret of his soul;
Which heard, his humble creatures shall unfold.

Bel. [*points to the wall.*] Be 't so — look there — behold those characters!
Nay, do not start, for I will know their meaning!
Ha! answer; speak, or instant death awaits you!
What, dumb! all dumb! where is your boasted skill? [*They confer together.*
Keep them asunder — no confederacy ———

No secret plots to make your tales agree.
Speak, slaves, and dare to let me know the worst!
[*They kneel.*
1*st As.* Oh, let the king forgive his faithful servants!
2*d As.* Oh, mitigate our threaten'd doom of death;
If we declare, with mingled grief and shame,
We cannot tell the secret of the king,
Nor what these mystic characters portend!
Bel. Off with their heads! Ye shall not live an hour!
Curse on your shallow arts, your lying science!
'Tis thus you practise on the credulous world,
Who think you wise because themselves are weak!
But, miscreants, ye shall die! the pow'r to punish
Is all that I have left me of a king.
1*st Cour.* Great Sire, suspend their punishment awhile.
Behold Nitocris comes, thy royal mother!

Enter QUEEN.

Queen. O my misguided son!
Well may'st thou wonder to behold me here:
For I have ever shunn'd this scene of riot,
Where wild intemperance and dishonour'd mirth
Hold festival impure. Yet, O Belshazzar!
I could not hear the wonders which befell,
And leave thee to the workings of despair:
For, spite of all the anguish of my soul
At thy offences, I'm thy mother still!
Against the solemn purpose I had form'd
Never to mix in this unhallow'd crowd,
The wondrous story of the mystic writing,
Of strange and awful import, brings me here;

If haply I may show some likely means
To fathom this dark mystery.
Bel. Speak, O queen!
My list'ning soul shall hang upon thy words,
And prompt obedience follow them!
Queen. Then hear me.
Among the captive tribes which hither came
To grace Nebassar's triumph, there was brought
A youth nam'd Daniel, favour'd by high Heav'n
With pow'r to look into the secret page
Of dim Futurity's mysterious volume.
The spirit of the holy gods is in him;
No vision so obscure, so deeply hid,
No sentence so perplex'd, but he can solve it:
He can unfold the dark decrees of fate,
Can trace each crooked labyrinth of thought,
Each winding maze of doubt, and make it clear
And palpable to sense. He twice explain'd
The monarch's mystic dreams. The holy seer
Saw, with prophetic spirit, what befell
The king long after. For his wondrous skill
He was rewarded, honour'd, and caress'd,
And with the rulers of Chaldea rank'd:
Though now, alas! thrown by, his services
Forgotten or neglected.
Bel. Send with speed
A message, to command the holy man
To meet us on the instant.
Nit. I already
Have sent to ask his presence at the palace;
And, lo! in happy season, see he comes.

Enter DANIEL.

Bel. Welcome, thrice venerable sage! approach.
Art thou that Daniel whom my great forefather
Brought hither with the captive tribes of Judah?
Dan. I am, O king!
Bel. Then, pardon, holy prophet;
Nor let a just resentment of thy wrongs,
And long-neglected merit shut thy heart
Against a king's request, a suppliant king.
Dan. The God I worship teaches to forgive.
Bel. Then let thy words bring comfort to my soul.
I've heard the spirit of the gods is in thee;
That thou canst look into the fates of men
With prescience more than human!
Dan. Hold, O king!
Wisdom is from above; 'tis God's own gift;
I of myself am nothing: but from Him
The little knowledge I possess, I hold;
To Him be all the glory!
Bel. Then, O Daniel!
If thou indeed dost boast that wondrous gift,
That faculty divine, look there and tell me!
O say what mean those mystic characters?
Remove this load of terror from my soul,
And honours, such as kings can give, await thee.
Thou shalt be great beyond thy soul's ambition,
And rich above thy wildest dream of wealth:
Clad in the scarlet robe our nobles wear,
And grac'd with princely ensigns, thou shalt stand
Near our own throne, and third within our empire.
Dan. O mighty king, thy gifts with thee remain,
And let thy high rewards on others fall.

The princely ensign, nor the scarlet robe,
Nor yet to be the third within thy realm,
Can touch the soul of Daniel. Honour, fame,
All that the world calls great, thy crown itself,
Could never satisfy the vast ambition
Of an immortal spirit; I aspire
Beyond the pow'r of giving; my high hopes
Reach also to a crown — but 'tis a crown
Unfading and eternal.

1st Cour. Wondrous man!
Our priests teach no such notions.

Dan. Yet, O king!
Though all unmov'd by grandeur or by gift,
I will unfold the high decrees of Heav'n,
And straight declare the myst'ry.

Bel. Speak, O prophet!

Dan. prepare to hear what kings have seldom heard;
Prepare to hear what courtiers seldom tell;
Prepare to hear — the truth. The mighty God,
Who rules the sceptres and the hearts of kings,
Gave thy renown'd forefather * here to reign,
With such extent of empire, weight of pow'r,
And greatness of dominion, the wide earth
Trembled beneath the terror of his name,
And kingdoms stood or fell as he decreed.
Oh! dang'rous pinnacle of pow'r supreme!
Who can stand safe upon its treach'rous top,
Behold the gazing prostrate world below,
Whom depth and distance into pigmies shrink,
And not grow giddy? Babylon's great king

* Nebuchadnezzar.

Forgot he was a man, a helpless man,
Subject to pain, and sin, and death, like others!
But who shall fight against Omnipotence?
Or, who hath harden'd his obdurate heart
Against the Majesty of Heav'n, and prosper'd?
The God he had insulted was aveng'd;
From empire, from the joys of social life,
He drove him forth; extinguish'd Reason's lamp;
Quench'd that bright spark of deity within;
Compell'd him with the forest brutes to roam
For scanty pasture; and the mountain dews
Fell, cold and wet, on his defenceless head,
Till he confess'd — let men, let monarchs hear!
Till he confess'd, PRIDE WAS NOT MADE FOR MAN!

Nit. Oh, awful instance of divine displeasure!

Bel. Proceed! My soul is wrapt in fix'd attention!

Dan. O king! thy grandsire not in vain had sinn'd,
If, from his error, thou hadst learnt the truth.
The story of his fall thou oft hast heard,
But has it taught thee wisdom? Thou, like him,
Hast been elate with pow'r, and mad with pride.
Like him thou hast defied the living God.
Nay, to bold thoughts hast added deeds more bold.
Thou hast outwrought the pattern he bequeath'd thee,
And quite outgone example; hast profan'd,
With impious hand, the vessels of the Temple:
Those vessels sanctified to holiest use,
Thou hast polluted with unhallow'd lips,
And made the instruments of foul debauch.
Thou hast ador'd the gods of wood and stone,
Vile, senseless deities, the work of hands,
But HE, THE KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS,

In whom exists thy life, thy soul, thy breath,
On whom thy being hangs, thou hast denied.
1st Cour. [*aside to the others.*] With what a holy boldness he reproves him!
2d Cour. Such is the fearless confidence of virtue!
And such the righteous courage those maintain
Who plead the cause of truth! The smallest word
He utters had been death to half the court.
Bel. Now let the mystic writing be explain'd,
Thrice venerable sage!
Dan. O mighty king!
Hear then its awful import: *Heav'n has number'd*
Thy days of royalty, and *soon will end them.*
Our God has weigh'd thee in the even balance
Of his own holy law, and *finds thee wanting:*
And last, *thy kingdom shall be wrested from thee;*
And know, *the Mede and Persian shall possess it.*
Bel. [*starts up.*] Prophet, when shall this be?
Dan. In God's own time:
Here my commission ends; I may not utter
More than thou 'st heard; but, oh! remember, king,
Thy days are number'd: hear, repent, and live!
Bel. Say, prophet, what can penitence avail?
If Heav'n's decrees immutably are fix'd,
Can prayers avert our fate?
Dan. They change our hearts,
And thus dispose Omnipotence to mercy.
'Tis man that alters; God is still the same.
Conditional are all Heav'n's covenants:
And when th' uplifted thunder is withheld,
'Tis pray'r that deprecates th' impending bolt.

Good Hezekiah's * days were number'd too:
But penitence and faith were mighty pleas:
At Mercy's throne they never plead in vain.
[*He is going.*

Bel. Stay, prophet, and receive thy promis'd gift;
The scarlet robe and princely chain are thine;
And let my heralds publish through the land
That Daniel stands, in dignity and pow'r,
The third in Babylon. These just rewards
Thou well mayst claim, though sad thy prophecy!

Qu. Be not deceiv'd, my son! nor let thy soul
Snatch an uncertain moment's treach'rous rest,
On the dread brink of that tremendous gulf
Which yawns beneath thee.

Dan. O unhappy king!
Know what *must* happen once, *may* happen soon.
Remember that 'tis terrible to meet
Great evils unprepar'd! and, O Belshazzar!
In the wild moment of dismay and death,
Remember thou wast warn'd! and, oh, remember,
Warnings despis'd are condemnations then!
[*Exeunt* DANIEL *and* QUEEN.

Bel. 'Tis well — my soul shakes off its load of care;
'Tis only the obscure is terrible.
Imagination frames events unknown,
In wild fantastic shapes of hideous ruin;
And what it fears creates! — I know the worst;
And awful is that worst as fear could feign:
But distant are the ills I have to dread!
What is remote may be uncertain too!
Ha! Princes! hope breaks in! — This may not be.

* 2 Chron. chap. xxxiii. Isaiah, chap. xxxviii.

1st Cour. Perhaps this Daniel is in league with Persia;
And brib'd by Cyrus to report these horrors,
To weaken and impede the mighty plans
Of thy imperial mind!

Bel. 'Tis very like.

2d Cour. Return we to the banquet?

Bel. Dare we venture?

3d Cour. Let not this dreaming seer disturb the king.
Against the power of Cyrus and the Mede
Is Babylon secure. Her brazen gates
Mock all attempts to force them. Proud Euphrates,
A wat'ry bulwark, guards our ample city
From all assailants. And within the walls
Of this stupendous capital are lodg'd
Such vast provisions, such exhaustless stores,
As a twice ten years' siege could never waste!

Bel. [*embraces him.*] My better genius! Safe in such resources,
I mock the prophet. — Turn we to the banquet!

[*As they are going to resume their places at the banquet, a dreadful uproar is heard, tumultuous cries and warlike sounds. All stand terrified. Enter soldiers with their swords drawn, and wounded.*]

Sol. Oh, helpless Babylon! Oh, wretched king!
Chaldea is no more! the Mede has conquer'd!
The victor Cyrus, like a mighty torrent,
Comes rushing on, and marks his way with ruin!
Destruction is at hand; escape or perish.

Bel. Impossible! Villain and slave, thou liest!
Euphrates and the brazen gates secure us:
While those remain, Belshazzar laughs at danger.
Sol. Euphrates is diverted from its course.
The brazen gates are burst, the city's taken,
Thyself a pris'ner, and thy empire lost.
Bel. Oh, prophet! I remember thee, indeed.
[*He runs out. They follow in the utmost confusion.*

Enter several Jews, Medes, and Babylonians.

1*st Jew.* He comes, he comes! the long-predicted prince,
Cyrus! the destin'd instrument of Heav'n,
To free our captive nation, and restore
JEHOVAH'S Temple. Carnage marks his way,
And conquest sits upon his plume-crown'd helm.
2*d Jew.* What noise is that?
1*st Jew.* Hark! 'tis Belshazzar's voice.
Bel. [*without.*] O soldier! spare my life, and aid my flight.
Such treasures shall reward the gentle deed
As Persia never saw. I'll be thy slave;
I'll yield my crown to Cyrus; I'll adore
His gods and thine — I'll kneel and kiss thy feet,
And worship thee. — It is not much I ask —
I'll live in bondage, beggary, and pain,
So thou but let me live.
Sol. Die, tyrant, die!
Bel. O Daniel! Daniel! Daniel!

Enter Soldier.

Sol. Belshazzar's dead!

The wretched king breath'd out his furious soul
In that tremeïndous groan.

1*st Jew.* Belshazzar's dead!
Then, Judah, art thou free! The tyrant's fall'n!
Jerusalem, Jerusalem is free!

BELSHAZZAR.

PART III.

Enter DANIEL *and* JEWS.

Dan. BEL boweth down *, and haughty Nebo stoops;
The idols fall, the god and worshipper
Together fall; together they bow down;
Each other, or themselves, they cannot save.
O Babylon, where is thy refuge now?
Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, meant to save,
Pervert thee; and thy blessing is thy bane.
Where are thy brutish deities, Chaldea?
Where are thy gods of gold? —— O Lord of life!
Thou very God! so fall thy foes before thee!

1*st Jew.* So fell beneath the terrors of Thy name
The idol Chemosh, Moab's empty trust;
So Ammonitish Moloch sunk before Thee;
So fell Philistine Dagon; so shall fall,
To time's remotest period, all thy foes,
Triumphant Lord of Hosts!

Dan. How chang'd our fate!
Not for myself, O Judah; but for thee,
I shed these tears of joy. For I no more
Must view the cedars which adorn the brow
Of Syrian Lebanon; no more shall see

* Isaiah, chap. xlvi.

Thy pleasant stream, O Jordan! nor the flocks
Which whiten all the mountains of Judea;
No more these eyes delighted shall review
Or Carmel's heights, or Sharon's flow'ry vales.
I must remain in Babylon. So Heav'n,
To whose awards I bow me, has decreed.
I ne'er shall see thee, Salem: I am old;
And few and toilsome are my days to come.
But we shall meet in those celestial climes,
Compar'd with which created glories sink;
Where sinners shall have pow'r to harm no more,
And martyr'd virtue rests her weary head.
Though ere my day of promis'd grace shall come,
I shall be tried by perils strange and new;
Nor shall I taste of death, so have I learn'd,
Till I have seen the captive tribes restor'd.

1st Jew. And shall we view, once more, thy hallow'd towers,
Imperial Salem?

Dan. Yes, my youthful friends;
You shall behold the second temple rise *,
With grateful ecstasy: but we, your sires,
Now bent with hoary age; we, whose charm'd eyes
Beheld the matchless glories of the first,
Should weep, rememb'ring what we once had seen,
That model of perfection.

2d Jew. Never more
Shall such a wondrous structure grace the earth.

Dan. Well have you borne affliction, men of Judah;
Well have sustain'd your portion of distress;
And unrepining drank the bitter dregs

* Ezra, chap. i.

Of adverse fortune. Happier days await you.
O guard against the perils of success!
Prosperity dissolves the yielding soul;
And the bright sun of shining fortune melts
The firmest virtue down. Beware, my friends,
Be greatly cautious of prosperity.
Defend your sliding hearts; and, trembling, think
How those, who buffeted Affliction's waves
With vigorous virtue, sunk in pleasure's calm.
He *, who of special grace had been allow'd
To rear the hallow'd fane to Israel's God,
By wealth corrupted, and by ease debauch'd,
Forsook the God to whom he rais'd the fane;
And, sunk in sensual sloth, consum'd his days
In vile idolatrous rites. Nor think, my sons,
That virtue in sequester'd *solitude*
Is always found. Within the inmost soul
The hidden tempter lurks; nor less betrays
In the still-seeming safety of retreat
Than where the world her snares entangling spreads,
More visible to sense. Guard every thought:
Who thinks himself secure is half undone;
For sin, unwatch'd, may reach the sanctuary:
'Tis not the place preserves us. Righteous Lot
Stemm'd the strong current of corruption's tide,
E'en in polluted Sodom; safe he liv'd,
While circumspective Virtue's watchful eye
Was anxiously awake; but in the shade,
Far from the obvious perils which alarm
With palpable temptation, secret sin

* Solomon.

Ensnar'd his soul; he trusted in himself;
Security betray'd him, and he fell.
2d Jew. Thy prudent counsels in our hearts shall live,
As if a pen of adamant had grav'd them.
1st Jew. The dawn approaches; let us part, my friend,
Secure of peace, since tyranny is fall'n.
Dan. So perish all thine enemies, O Lord!
So, mighty God, shall perish all who seek
Corrupted pleasures in the turbid waves
Of life's polluted stream, and madly quit
The living fountain of perennial grace.

DANIEL:

A

Sacred Drama.

The Righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the Wicked cometh in his stead. *Proverbs of Solomon.*

On peut des plus grands rois surprendre la justice.
Incapables de tromper
Ils ont peine a s'échapper
Des pièges de l'artifice.
Un cœur noble ne peut soupçonner en autrui
La basesse et la malice
Qu'il ne sent point en lui.

ESTHER. — *Tragédie de Racine.*

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

DARIUS, King of Media and Babylon.

PHARNACES, } Courtiers, enemies to Daniel.
SORANUS, }

ARASPES, a young Median Lord, friend and convert to Daniel.

DANIEL.

SCENE — *The City of Babylon.*

The Subject is taken from the Sixth Chapter of the Prophet Daniel.

DANIEL.

PART I.

PHARNACES, SORANUS.

Phar. YES; — I have noted with a jealous eye
The pow'r of this new fav'rite. Daniel reigns,
And not Darius. Daniel guides the springs
Which move this mighty empire. High he sits,
Supreme in favour both with prince and people.
Where is the spirit of our Median lords,
Tamely to crouch and bend the supple knee
To this new god? By Mithras, 'tis too much.
Shall great Arbaces' race to Daniel bow?
A foreigner, a captive, and a Jew.
Something must be devis'd, and that right soon,
To shake his credit.

Sor. Rather hope to shake
The mountain pine, whose twisting fibres clasp
The earth, deep rooted. Rather hope to shake
The Scythian Taurus from his central base.
No — Daniel sits too absolute in pow'r,
Too firm in favour, for the keenest shaft
Of nicely-aiming jealousy to reach him.

Phar. Rather, he sits too high to sit securely.
Yes; he has reach'd that pinnacle of pow'r
Which closely touches on Depression's verge.

Hast thou then liv'd in courts? hast thou grown grey
Beneath the mask a subtle statesman wears
To hide his secret soul, and dost not know
That, of all fickle Fortune's transient gifts,
Favour is most deceitful? 'Tis a beam
Which darts uncertain brightness for a moment:
The faint precarious sickly shine of pow'r;
iv'n without merit, by caprice withdrawn.
No trifle is so small as what obtains,
Save that which loses, favour: 'tis a breath
Which hangs upon a smile; a look, a word,
A frown, the air-built tow'r of fortune shakes,
And down the unsubstantial fabric falls.
Darius, just and clement as he is,
If I mistake not, may be wrought upon
By prudent wiles, by Flatt'ry's pleasant cup,
Administer'd with caution.

Sor. But the means?
For Daniel's life (a foe must grant him that)
Is so replete with goodness, so adorn'd
With every virtue, so exactly squar'd
By Wisdom's nicest rules, 'twill be most hard
To charge him with the shadow of offence.
Pure is his fame as Scythia's mountain snows,
When not a breath pollutes them. O Pharnaces,
I've scann'd the actions of his daily life
With all th' industrious malice of a foe,
And nothing meets mine eye but deeds of honour.
In office pure; for equitable acts
Renown'd: in justice and impartial truth,
The Grecian Themis is not more severe.

Phar. By yon bright sun thou blazon'st forth his praise,

As if with rapture thou didst read the page
Where these fair deeds are written.
Sor. Thou mistak'st.
I only meant to show what cause we have
To hate and fear him. I but meant to paint
His popular virtues, and eclipsing merit.
Then for devotion, and religious zeal,
Who so renown'd as Daniel? Of his law
Observant in th' extreme. Thrice every day,
With prostrate rev'rence he adores his God:
With superstitious awe his face he turns
Towards his belov'd Jerusalem, as if
Some local, partial god might there be found
To hear his supplication. No affair
Of state, no business so importunate,
No pleasure so alluring, no employ
Of such high import, to seduce his zeal
From this observance due.
Phar. There, there he falls.
Enough, my friend: his piety destroys him.
There, at the very footstool of his God,
Where he implores protection, there I'll crush him.
Sor. What means Pharnaces?
Phar. Ask not what I mean:
The new idea floating in my brain
Has yet receiv'd no form. 'Tis yet too soon
To give it body, circumstance, or breath.
The seeds of mighty deeds are lab'ring here,
And struggling for a birth. 'Tis near the hour
The king is wont to summon us to council:
Ere that, this big conception of my mind
I'll shape to form and being. Thou, meanwhile,
Convene our chosen friends; for I shall need

The aid of all your counsels, and the weight
Of grave authority.
Sor. Who shall be trusted?
Phar. With our immediate motive none, except
A chosen band of friends, who most repine
At Daniel's exaltation. But the scheme
I meditate must be disclos'd to all
Who bear high office: all our Median rulers,
Princes and captains, presidents and lords;
All must assemble. 'Tis a common cause:
All but the young Araspes; he inclines
To Daniel and his God. He sits attent,
With ravish'd ears, to listen to his lore:
With rev'rence names Jerusalem, and reads
The volume of the law. No more he bows
To hail the golden Ruler of the day,
But looks for some great Prophet, greater far,
So they pretend, than Mithras. From him, therefore,
Conceal whate'er of injury is devis'd
'Gainst Daniel. Be it to thy care to-day
To keep him from the council.
Sor. 'Tis well thought.
'Tis now about the hour of Daniel's pray'r:
Araspes, too, is with him; and to-day
They will not sit in council. Haste we then.
Designs of high importance, once conceiv'd,
Should be accomplish'd. Genius which discerns,
And courage which achieves, despise the aid
Of ling'ring circumspection. The keen spirit
Seizes the prompt occasion, makes the thought
Start into instant action, and at once
Plans and performs, resolves and executes.

DANIEL.

PART II.

SCENE — DANIEL'S *House.*

DANIEL, ARASPES.

Aras. PROCEED, proceed, thrice venerable sage:
Enlighten my dark mind with this new ray,
This dawning of salvation. Tell me more
Of this expected King! This Comforter!
This Promise of the nations! This great Hope
Of anxious Israel! This unborn Prophet!
This Wonderful, this Mighty Counsellor!
This everlasting Lord! This Prince of Peace!
This Balm of Gilead, which shall heal the wounds
Of universal nature! This MESSIAH!
Redeemer, Saviour, Sufferer, Victim, GOD!

Dan. Enough to animate our faith we know,
But not enough to soothe the curious pride
Of vain philosophy. Enough to cheer
Our path we see, the rest is hid in clouds;
And Heaven's own shadows rest upon the view.

Aras. Go on, blest sage: I could for ever hear,
Untir'd, thy admonition. Tell me how
I shall obtain the favour of that God
I but begin to know, but fain would serve.

Dan. By deep humility, by faith unfeign'd,
By holy deëds, best proof of living faith.
O faith *, thou wonder-working principle,
Eternal substance of our present hope,
Thou evidence of things invisible!
What cannot man sustain, sustain'd by thee!
The time would fail, and the bright star of day
Would quench his beams in ocean, and resign
His empire to the silver queen of night;
And she again descend the steep of heav'n,
If I should tell what wonders faith achiev'd
By Gideon, Barak, and the holy seer,
Elkanah's son; the pious Gileadite,
Ill-fated Jephthah. He of Zorah, too †,
In strength unequall'd; and the shepherd king,
Who vanquish'd Gath's fell giant. Need I tell
Of holy prophets, who, by conqu'ring faith,
Wrought deeds incredible to mortal sense;
Vanquish'd contending kingdoms, quell'd the rage
Of furious pestilence, extinguish'd fire.
Victorious faith! others by thee endur'd
Exile, disgrace, captivity, and death.
Some, uncomplaining, bore (nor be it deem'd
The meanest exercise of well-tried faith)
The cruel mocking, and the bitter taunt,
Foul obloquy, and undeserv'd reproach;
Despising shame, that death to human pride.

Aras. How shall this faith be sought?

Dan. By earnest pray'r
Solicit first the wisdom from above:

* Hebrews, chap. xi. † Sampson.

Wisdom, whose fruits are purity and peace.
Wisdom, that bright intelligence which sat
Supreme, when with his golden compasses *
Th' Eternal plann'd the fabric of the world,
Produc'd his fair idea into light,
And said that all was good. Wisdom, blest beam!
The brightness of the everlasting light!
The spotless mirror of the pow'r of God!
The reflex image of th' all-perfect Mind!
A stream translucent, flowing from the source
Of glory infinite! a cloudless light!
Defilement cannot touch, nor sin pollute,
Her unstain'd purity! Not Ophir's gold,
Nor Ethiopia's gems, can match her price!
The ruby of the mine is pale before her!
And like the oil Elisha's bounty bless'd,
She is a treasure which doth grow by use,
And multiply by spending! She contains
Within herself the sum of excellence:
If riches are desir'd, wisdom is wealth!
If prudence, where shall keen invention find
Artificer more cunning! If renown,
In her right hand it comes! If piety,
Are not her labours virtues? If the lore
Which sage experience teaches, lo! she scans
Antiquity's dark truths; the past she knows,
Anticipates the future; not by arts
Forbidden, of Chaldean sorcerer,
But from the piercing ken of deep foreknowledge,

* See Paradise Lost, book vii. line 225. Proverbs, chap. viii. ver. 27.

From her sure science of the human heart
She weighs effects with causes, ends with means;
Resolving all into the sovereign will.
For earthly blessings moderate be thy pray'r,
And qualified; for light, for strength, for grace,
Unbounded thy petition.

Aras. Now, O prophet!
Explain the secret doubts which rack my mind,
And my weak sense confound. Give me some line
To sound the depths of Providence! Oh say,
Why the ungodly prosper? why their root
Shoots deep, and their thick branches flourish fair,
Like the green bay-tree? why the righteous man,
Like tender plants to shiv'ring winds expos'd,
Is stripp'd and torn, in naked virtue bare,
And nipp'd by cruel Sorrow's biting blast?
Explain, O Daniel! these mysterious ways
To my faint apprehension. For as yet
I've much to learn. Fair Truth's immortal sun
Is sometimes hid in clouds; not that her light
Is in itself defective; but obscur'd
By my weak prejudice, imperfect Faith,
And all the thousand causes which obstruct
The growth of goodness.

Dan. Follow me, Araspes.
Within thou shalt peruse the sacred page,
The book of life eternal: *that* will show thee
The END of the ungodly: thou wilt own
How short their longest period; will perceive
How black a night succeeds their brightest day.
Thy purg'd eye will see God is not slack,
As men count slackness, to fulfil his word.

Weigh well this book; and may the Spirit of grace,
Who stamp'd the seal of truth on the bless'd page,
Descend into thy soul, remove thy doubts,
Clear the perplex'd, and solve the intricate,
Till faith be lost in sight, and hope in joy.

DANIEL.

PART III.

DARIUS *on his Throne.* — PHARNACES, SORANUS, Princes, Presidents, *and* Courtiers.

Phar. HAIL, King Darius! live for ever!
Dar. Welcome!
Welcome, my princes, presidents, and friends!
Now tell me, has your wisdom aught devis'd
To aid the commonwealth? In our new empire,
Subdu'd Chaldea, is there aught remains
Your prudence can suggest to serve the state,
To benefit the subject, to redress
And raise the injur'd, to assist th' oppress'd,
And humble the oppressor? If you know,
Speak freely, princes. Why am I a king,
Except to poise the awful scale of justice
With even hand; to minister to want;
To bless the nations with a liberal rule,
Vicegerent of th' eternal Oromasdes?
Phar. So absolute thy wisdom, mighty king,
All counsel were superfluous.
Dar. Hold, Pharnaces!
No adulation: 'tis the death of virtue.
Who flatters is of all mankind the lowest,
Save he who courts the flattery. Kings are men,

As feeble and as frail as those they rule;
And born, like them, to die. The Lydian monarch,
Unhappy Crœsus, lately sat aloft,
Almost above mortality: now see him:
Sunk to the vile condition of a slave,
He swells the train of Cyrus. I, like him,
To misery am obnoxious. See this throne;
This royal throne the great Nebassar fill'd;
Yet hence his pride expell'd him. Yonder wall
The dread terrific writing to the eyes
Of proud Belshazzar show'd; sad monuments
Of Heav'n's tremendous vengeance; and shall I,
Unwarn'd by such examples, cherish pride?
Yet to their dire calamities I owe
The brightest gem that glistens in my crown,
Sage Daniel. If my speech have aught of worth,
Or if my life with aught of good be grac'd,
To him alone I owe it.

Sor. [*aside to Phar.*] Now, Pharnaces,
Will he run o'er, and dwell upon his praise,
As if we ne'er had heard it; nay, will swell
The nauseous catalogue with many a virtue
His own fond fancy coins.

Phar. O great Darius!
Let thine unworthy servant's words find grace,
And meet acceptance in his royal ear,
Who subjugates the East. Let not the king
With anger hear my pray'r.

Dar. Pharnaces, speak;
I know thou lov'st me; I but meant to chide
Thy flattery, not reprove thee for thy zeal.
Speak boldly, friends, as man should speak to man.

Perish the barb'rous maxims of the East,
Which basely would enslave the free-born mind,
And plunder man of the best gift of Heav'n,
His liberty of soul.
Phar. Darius, hear me.
Thy princes, and the captains of thy bands,
Thy presidents, the nobles who bear rule
O'er provinces, and I, thine humble creature,
Less than the least in merit, but in love,
In zeal, and duty, equal with the first,
We have devis'd a measure to confirm
Thy infant empire, to establish firmly
Thy pow'r and new dominion, and secure
Thy growing greatness past the pow'r of change.
Dar. I am prepar'd to hear thee. Speak, Pharnaces.
Phar. The wretched Babylonians long have groan'd
Beneath the rule of princes weak or rash:
The rod of pow'r was sway'd alike amiss
By feeble Merodach and fierce Belshazzar.
One let the slacken'd reins too loosely float
Upon the people's neck, and lost his pow'r
By nerveless relaxation. He who follow'd
Held with a tyrant's hand the cruel curb,
And check'd the groaning nation till it bled:
On different rocks they met one common ruin:
Their edicts were irresolute, their laws
Were feebly plann'd, their councils ill-advis'd;
Now so relax'd, and now so overstrain'd,
That the tir'd people, wearied with the weight
They long have borne, will soon disdain control,
Tread on all rule, and spurn the hand that guides 'em.
Dar. But say, what remedy?

Phar. That too, O King!
Thy servants have provided. Hitherto
They bear the yoke submissive. But to fix
Thy pow'r and their obedience, to reduce
All hearts to thy dominion, yet avoid
Those deeds of cruelty thy nature starts at,
Thou should'st begin by some imperial act
Of absolute dominion, yet unstain'd
By aught of barbarous. For know, O king!
Wholesome severity, if wisely fram'd
With sober discipline, procures more reverence
Than all the lenient counsels and weak measures
Of frail irresolution.
Dar. Now proceed
To thy request.
Phar. Not I, but all request it.
Be thy imperial edict issued straight,
And let a firm decree be this day pass'd,
Irrevocable, as our Median laws:
Ordain that for the space of thirty days
No subject in thy realm shall aught request
Of God or man, except of thee, O king!
Dar. Wherefore this strange decree?
Phar. 'Twill fix the crown
With lasting safety on thy royal brow,
And, by a bloodless means, preserve th' obedience
Of this new empire. Think how much 'twill raise
Thy high renown. 'Twill make thy name rever'd,
And popular beyond example. What!
To be as Heav'n, dispensing good and ill
For thirty days! With thine own ears to hear
Thy people's wants, with thine own lib'ral hands

To bless thy suppliant subjects! O Darius!
Thou'lt seem as bounteous as a giving god;
And reign in every heart in Babylon
As well as Media. What a glorious state,
To be the sovereign arbiter of good!
The first efficient cause of happiness!
To scatter mercies with a plenteous hand,
And to be blest thyself in blessing others!

Dar. Is this the gen'ral wish?

[*Princes and courtiers kneel.*

Chief Pres. Of one, of all.
Behold thy princes, presidents, and lords,
Thy counsellors, and captains. See, O king!

[*Presenting the edict.*

Behold the instrument our zeal has drawn:
The edict is prepar'd. We only wait
The confirmation of thy gracious word,
And thy imperial signet.

Dar. Say, Pharnaces,
What penalty awaits the man who dares
Transgress our mandate?

Phar. Instant death, O king!
This statute says, "Should any subject dare
"Petition, for the space of thirty days,
"Of God or man, except of thee, O king!
"He shall be thrown into yon dreadful den
"Of hungry lions!"

Dar. Hold! Methinks a deed
Of such importance should be wisely weigh'd.

Phar. We have revolv'd it, mighty king, with care,
With closest scrutiny. On us devolve
Whatever blame occurs.

Dar. I'm satisfied.
Then to your wisdom I commit me, princes.
Behold the royal signet: see, 'tis done.
Phar. (*aside.*) There Daniel fell! That signet seal'd his doom.
Dar. (*after a pause.*) Let me reflect — Sure I have been too rash.
Why such intemp'rate haste? but you are wise,
And would not counsel this severe decree
But for the wisest purpose. Yet, methinks,
I might have weigh'd, and in my mind revolv'd
This statute, ere, the royal signet stamp'd,
It had been past repeal. Sage Daniel, too,
My counsellor, my guide, my well-tried friend,
He should have been consulted: he whose wisdom
I still have found oracular.
Phar. Mighty king,
'Tis as it should be. The decree is past
Irrevocable, as the steadfast law
Of Mede and Persian, which can never change:
Those who observe it live, as is most meet,
High in thy grace; — who violate it, die.

DANIEL.

PART IV.

SCENE — *Daniel's House.*

DANIEL, ARASPES.

Aras. OH, holy Daniel, prophet, father, friend,
I come the wretched messenger of ill.
Thy foes complot thy death. For what can mean
This new-made law, extorted from the king
Almost by force? What can it mean, O Daniel,
But to involve thee in the toils they spread
To snare thy precious life?
Dan. How! was the king
Consenting to this edict?
Aras. They surpris'd
His easy nature; took him when his heart
Was soften'd by their blandishments. They wore
The mask of public virtue to deceive him:
Beneath the specious name of general good,
They wrought him to their purposes: no time
Allow'd him to delib'rate. One short hour,
Another moment, and his soul had gain'd
Her natural tone of virtue.
Dan. That great Pow'r
Who suffers evil only to produce

Some unseen good, permits that this should be;
And, He permitting, I, well pleas'd, resign.
Retire, my friend: this is my second hour
Of daily pray'r. Anon we'll meet again.
Here, in the open face of that bright sun
Thy fathers worshipp'd, will I offer up,
As is my rule, petition to our God,
For thee, for me, for Solyma, for all!

Aras. Oh, stay: what mean'st thou? sure thou hast not heard
The edict of the king? I thought, but now,
Thou knew'st its purport. It expressly says,
That no petition henceforth shall be made,
For thirty days, save only to the king;
Nor pray'r nor intercession shall be heard
Of any god or man, but of Darius.

Dan. And think'st thou then my rev'rence for the king,
Good as he is, shall tempt me to renounce
My sworn allegiance to the King of kings?
Hast thou commanded legions? strove in battle,
Defied the face of danger, mock'd at death
In all its frightful forms, and tremblest now?
Come, learn of me: I'll teach thee to be bold,
Tho' sword I never drew. Fear not, Araspes,
The feeble vengeance of a mortal man,
Whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein
Is he to be accounted of? but fear
The awaken'd vengeance of the living Lord;
He who can plunge the everlasting soul
In infinite perdition.

Aras. Then, O Daniel!

If thou persist to disobey the edict,
Retire and hide thee from the prying eyes
Of busy malice.
Dan. He who is asham'd
To vindicate the honour of his God,
Of him the living Lord shall be asham'd
When He shall judge the tribes.
Aras. Yet, oh, remember,
Oft I have heard thee say, the secret heart
Is fair Devotion's Temple; there the saint,
E'en on that living altar, lights the flame
Of purest sacrifice, which burns unseen,
Not unaccepted. — I remember, too,
When Syrian Naaman*, by Elisha's hand,
Was cleans'd from foul pollution, and his mind,
Enlighten'd by the miracle, confess'd
The Almighty God of Jacob; that he deem'd it
No flagrant violation of his faith
To bend at Rimmon's shrine; nor did the Seer
Forbid the rite external.
Dan. Know, Araspes,
Heav'n deigns to suit our trials to our strength.
A recent convert, feeble in his faith,
Naaman, perhaps, had sunk beneath the weight
Of so severe a duty. Gracious Heaven
Forbears to bruise the reed, or quench the flax
When feeble and expiring. But shall I,
Shall Daniel, shall the servant of the Lord,
A vet'ran in his cause — long train'd to know
And do his will — long exercis'd in woe,
Bred in captivity, and born to suffer;

* 2 Kings, chap. v.

Shall I from known, from certain duty shrink
To shun a threaten'd danger? O, Araspes!
Shall I, advanc'd in age, in zeal decline?
Grow careless as I reach my journey's end?
And slacken in my pace, the goal in view?
Perish discretion when it interferes
With duty! Perish the false policy
Of human wit, which would commute our safety
With God's eternal honour! Shall His law
Be set at nought, that I may live at ease?
How would the heathen triumph, should I fall
Through coward fear! How would God's enemies
Insultingly blaspheme!

Aras. Yet think a moment.

Dan. No; ——
Where evil may be *done*, 'tis right to ponder;
Where only *suffer'd*, know, the shortest pause
Is much too long. Had great Darius paus'd,
This ill had been prevented. But for me,
Araspes, to deliberate is to sin.

Aras. Think of thy pow'r, thy favour with Darius;
Think of thy life's importance to the tribes,
Scarce yet return'd in safety. Live, oh, live.
To serve the cause of God.

Dan. God will himself
Sustain his righteous cause. He knows to raise
Fit instruments to serve him. Know, Araspes,
He does not need our crimes to help his cause;
Nor does his equitable law permit
A sinful act, from the prepost'rous plea
That good may follow it. For me, my friend,
The spacious earth holds not a bait to tempt me.

What would it profit me, if I should gain
Imperial Ecbatan, th' extended land
Of fruitful Media, nay, the world's wide empire,
If mine eternal soul must be the price?
Farewell, my friend, time presses. I have stol'n
Some moments from my duty to confirm
And strengthen thy young faith: let us fulfil
What Heav'n enjoins, and leave to Heav'n th' event.

DANIEL.

PART V.

SCENE — *The Palace.*

PHARNACES, SORANUS.

Phar. 'Tis done — success has crown'd our scheme, Soranus;
And Daniel falls into the deep-laid toils
Our prudence spread.
Sor. That he should fall so soon,
Astonishes e'en me. What! not a day?
What! not a single moment to defer
His rash devotions? Madly thus to rush
On certain peril quite transcends belief.
When happen'd it, Pharnaces?
Phar. On the instant:
Scarce is the deed accomplish'd. As he made
His ostentatious pray'r, e'en in the face
Of the bright God of day, all Babylon
Beheld the insult offer'd to Darius.
For, as in bold defiance of the law,
His windows were not clos'd. Our chosen bands,
Whom we had plac'd to note him, straight rush'd in,
And seiz'd him in the warmth of his blind zeal,
Ere half his pray'r was finish'd. Young Araspes,

With all the wild extravagance of grief,
Prays, weeps, and threatens. Daniel silent stands,
With patient resignation, and prepares
To follow them. — But see, the king approaches.
Sor. How's this? deep sorrow sits upon his brow,
And stern resentment fires his angry eye.

Enter DARIUS.

Dar. O déep-laid stratagem! O artful wile!
To take me unprepar'd, to wound my heart,
E'en where it feels most tenderly, in friendship.
To stab my fame! to hold me up a mark
To future ages, for the perjur'd prince
Who slew the friend he lov'd! O Daniel, Daniel!
Who now shall trust Darius? Not a slave
In my wide empire, from the Indian main
To the cold Caspian, but is more at ease
Than I, his monarch! Yes, I've done a deed
Will blot my honour with eternal stain!
Pharnaces! O thou hoary sycophant!
Thou wily politician! thou hast snar'd
Thy unsuspecting master!
Phar. Great Darius,
Let not resentment blind thy royal eyes.
In what am I to blame? Who could suspect
This obstinate resistance to the law?
Who could foresee that Daniel would perforce
Oppose the king's decree?
Dar. Thou, thou foresaw'st it:
Thou knew'st his righteous soul would ne'er endure
So long an interval of pray'r. But I,
Deluded king! 'twas I should have foreseen

His steadfast piety. I should have thought
Your earnest warmth had some more secret source,
Something that touch'd you nearer than your love,
Your well-feign'd zeal for me — I should have known
When selfish politicians, hackney'd long
In fraud and artifice, affect a glow
Of patriot fervour, or fond loyalty,
Which scorns all show of interest, that's the moment
To watch their crooked projects. — Well thou know'st
How dear I held him; how I priz'd his truth.
Did I not choose him from a subject world,
Unblest by fortune, and by birth ungrac'd,
A captive and a Jew? Did I not love him?
Was he not rich in independent worth?
And great in native goodness? That undid him!
There, there he fell! If he had been less great,
He had been safe. Thou could'st not bear his bright-
ness;
The lustre of his virtues quite obscur'd,
And dimm'd thy fainter merit. Rash old man!
Go, and devise some means to set me free
From this dread load of guilt. Go, set at work
Thy plotting genius to redeem the life
Of venerable Daniel.

Phar. 'Tis too late.
He has offended 'gainst the new decree;
Has dar'd to make petition to his God,
Although the dreadful sentence of the act
Full well he knew. And by th' establish'd law
Of Media, by that law irrevocable,
Which he has dar'd to violate, he dies.

Dar. Impiety! presumption! monstrous law!

Irrevocable? Is there aught on earth
Deserves that name? Th' eternal laws alone
Of Oromasdes are unchangeable.
All human projects are so faintly fram'd,
So feebly plann'd, so liable to change,
So mix'd with error in their very form,
That mutable and mortal are the same.
But where is Daniel? Wherefore comes he not
To load me with reproaches? to upbraid me
With all the wrongs my barb'rous haste has done him?
Where is he?

Phar. He prepares to meet his fate.
This hour he dies, for so the act decrees.

Dar. Suspend the bloody sentence. Bring him hither.
Or rather let me seek him, and implore
His dying pardon, and his parting pray'r.

DANIEL.

PART VI.

SCENE — *Daniel's House.*

DANIEL, ARASPES.

Aras. STILL let me follow thee; still let me hear
The voice of Wisdom, ere the silver cord
By Death's cold hand be loosen'd.
Dan. Now I'm ready!
No grief; no woman's weakness, good Araspes:
Thou should'st rejoice my pilgrimage is o'er,
And the blest haven of repose in view.
Aras. And must I lose thee, Daniel? Must thou die?
Dan. And what is death, my friend, that I should fear it?
To die! why 'tis to triumph: 'tis to join
The great assembly of the good and just;
Immortal worthies, heroes, prophets, saints!
Oh, 'tis to join the band of holy men,
Made perfect by their sufferings! 'Tis to meet
My great progenitors! 'Tis to behold
Th' illustrious patriarchs; they with whom the Lord
Deign'd hold familiar converse! 'Tis to see
Bless'd Noah and his children, once a world!

'Tis to behold, oh, rapture to conceive!
Those we have known, and lov'd, and lost below!
Bold Azâriah, and the band of brothers,
Who sought, in bloom of youth, the scorching flames!
Nor shall we see heroic men alone,
Champions who fought the fight of faith on earth;
But heav'nly conquerors, angelic hosts,
Michael and his bright legions, who subdu'd
The foes of truth! To join their blest employ
Of love and praise! To the high melodies
Of choirs celestial to attune my voice,
According to the golden harps of saints!
To join in blest Hosannas to their King!
Whose face to see, whose glory to behold,
Alone were Heav'n, though saint or seraph none
Should meet our sight, and only God were there!
This is to die! Who would not die for this?
Who would not die that he might live for ever?

DARIUS, DANIEL, ARASPES.

Dar. Where is he? where is Daniel? Let me see him!
Let me embrace that venerable form,
Which I have doom'd to glut the greedy maw
Of furious lions!

Dan. King Darius, hail!

Dar. Oh, injur'd Daniel! Can I see thee thus,
Thus uncomplaining? Can I bear to hear
That when the ruffian ministers of death
Stopp'd thy unfinish'd prayer, thy pious lips
Had just invok'd a blessing on Darius,
On him who sought thy life? Thy murd'rers dropt

Tears of strange pity. Look not on me thus
With mild benignity! Oh! I could bear
The voice of keen reproach, or the strong flash
Of fierce resentment; but I cannot stand
That touching silence, nor that patient eye
Of meek respect.

Dan. Thou art my master still.

Dar. I am thy murderer! I have sign'd thy death!

Dan. I know thy bent of soul is honourable:
Thou hast been gracious still! Were it not so,
I would have met the appointment of high Heav'n
With humble acquiescence; but to know
Thy will concurr'd not with thy servant's fate,
Adds joy to resignation.

Dar. Here I swear,
By him who sits enthron'd in yon bright sun,
Thy blood shall be aton'd! On these thy foes
Thou shalt have ample vengeance.

Dan. Hold, O king!
Vengeance is mine, th' eternal Lord has said:
Myself will recompense, with even hand,
The sinner for the sin. The wrath of man
Works not the righteousness of God.

Dar. I had hop'd
We should have trod this busy stage together
A little longer, then have sunk to rest
In honourable age. Who now shall guide
My shatter'd bark in safety? Who shall now
Direct me? Oh unhappy state of kings!
'Tis well the robe of majesty is gay,
Or who would put it on? A crown! What is it?
It is to bear the miseries of a people!

To hear their murmurs, feel their discontents,
And sink beneath a load of splendid care!
To have your best success ascrib'd to Fortune,
And Fortune's failures all ascrib'd to you!
It is to sit upon a joyless height,
To ev'ry blast of changing fate expos'd!
Too high for hope! too great for happiness!
For friendship too much fear'd! To all the joys
Of social freedom, and th' endearing charm
Of lib'ral interchange of soul unknown!
Fate meant me an exception to the rest,
And, though a monarch, bless'd me with a friend;
And I — have murder'd him!

Dan. My hour approaches.
Hate not my mem'ry, king: protect Araspes:
Encourage Cyrus in the holy work
Of building ruin'd Solyma. Farewell!

Dar. With most religious strictness I'll fulfill
Thy last request. Araspes shall be next
My throne and heart. Farewell! [*They embrace.*
Hear, future kings,
Ye unborn rulers of the nations, hear!
Learn from my crime, from my misfortunes learn,
Never to trust to weak or wicked hands,
That delegated pow'r which Oromasdes
Invests in monarchs for the public good.

DANIEL.

PART VII.

SCENE — *The Court of the Palace.* — *The Sun rising.*

DARIUS, ARASPES.

Dar. OH, good Araspes! what a night of horror!
To me the dawning day brings no return
Of cheerfulnes or peace! No balmy sleep
Has seal'd these eyes, no nourishment has past
These loathing lips, since Daniel's fate was sign'd!
Hear what my fruitless penitence resolves —
The thirty days my rashness had decreed
The edict's force should last, I will devote
To mourning and repentance, fasting, pray'r,
And all due rites of grief. For thirty days
No pleasant sound of dulcimer or harp,
Sackbut or flute, or psaltery, shall charm
My ear, now dead to every note of joy!
Aras. My grief can know no period!
Dar. See that den!
There Daniel met the furious lion's rage!
There were the patient martyr's mangled limbs
Torn piecemeal! Never hide thy tears, Araspes!
'Tis virtuous sorrow, unallay'd, like mine,
By guilt and fell remorse! Let us approach:

Who knows but that dread Pow'r to whom he pray'd
So often and so fervently, has heard him!
[*He goes to the mouth of the den.*
O Daniel! servant of the living God!
He whom thou hast serv'd so long, and lov'd so well,
From the devouring lion's famish'd jaw,
Can He deliver thee?
DANIEL (*from the bottom of the den*).
He can — he has!
Dar. Methought I heard him speak!
Aras. Oh! wondrous force
Of strong imagination! were thy voice
Loud as the trumpet's blast, it could not wake him
From that eternal sleep!
DANIEL (*in the den*).
Hail! king Darius!
The God I serve has shut the lion's mouth,
To vindicate my innocence.
Dar. He speaks!
He lives!
Aras. 'Tis no illusion: 'tis the sound
Of his known voice.
Dar. Where are my servants? Haste,
Fly, swift as lightning, free him from the den;
Release him, bring him hither! Break the seal
Which keeps him from me! See, Araspes, look!
See the charm'd lions; — mark their mild demeanour:
Araspes, mark! — they have no power to hurt him!
See how they hang their heads and smooth their fierceness
At his mild aspect.
Aras. Who that sees this sight,

Who that in after-times shall hear this told,
Can doubt if Daniel's God be GOD indeed?

Dar. None, none, Araspes!

Aras. Ah, he comes, he comes!

Enter DANIEL, *followed by multitudes.*

Dan. Hail, great Darius!

Dar. Dost thou live indeed!
And live unhurt?

Aras. Oh, miracle of joy!

Dar. I scarce can trust my eyes! How didst thou 'scape?

Dan. That bright and glorious Being who vouchsaf'd
Presence divine, when the three martyr'd brothers
Essay'd the caldron's flame, supported me!
E'en in the furious lions' dreadful den,
The prisoner of hope, even there I turn'd
To the strong hold, the bulwark of my strength,
Ready to hear, and mighty to redeem!

Dar. [*to Araspes.*] Where is Pharnaces? Take the hoary traitor!
Take, too, Soranus, and the chief abettors
Of this dire edict; let not one escape:
The punishment their deep-laid hate devis'd
For holy Daniel, on their heads shall fall
With tenfold vengeance. To the lions' den
I doom his vile accusers! All their wives,
Their children too, shall share one common fate!
Take care that none escape. — Go, good Araspes.

[ARASPES *goes out.*

Dan. Not so, Darius!

Oh, spare the guiltless; spare the guilty too!
Where sin is not, to punish were unjust;
And where sin is, O king, their fell remorse
Supplies the place of punishment!
Dar. No more!
My word is past! Not one request, save this,
Shalt thou e'er make in vain. Approach, my friends;
Araspes has already spread the tale,
And see what crowds advance!
People. Long live Darius!
Long live great Daniel, too, the people's friend!
Dar. Draw near, my subjects. See this holy man!
Death had no power to harm him. Yon fell band
Of famish'd lions, soften'd at his sight,
Forgot their nature, and grew tame before him.
The mighty God protects his servants thus:
The righteous thus he rescues from the snare:
While fraud's artificer himself shall fall
In the deep gulf his wily arts devise
To snare the innocent.
A Cour. To the same den
Araspes bears Pharnaces and his friends;
Fall'n is their insolence! With prayers and tears
And all the meanness of high-crested pride,
When adverse fortune frowns, they beg for life.
Araspes will not hear. "You heard not me,"
He cries, when I for Daniel's life implor'd;
"His God protected him! see now if yours
"Will listen to your cries!"
Dar. Now hear,
People and nations, languages and realms,
O'er whom I rule! Peace be within your walls!

That I may banish from the minds of men
The rash decree gone out: hear me resolve
To counteract its force by one more just.
In ev'ry kingdom of my wide-stretch'd realm,
From fair Chaldea to th' extremest bound
Of northern Media, be my edict sent,
And this my statute known. My heralds, haste,
And spread my loyal mandate through the land,
That all my subjects bow the ready knee
To Daniel's GOD — for HE alone is LORD.
Let all adore, and tremble at his name,
Who sits in glory unapproachable
Above the heav'ns — above the heav'n of heav'ns!
HIS pow'er is everlasting; and HIS throne,
Founded in equity and truth, shall last
Beyond the bounded reign of time and space,
Through wide eternity! With HIS right arm
HE saves, and who opposes? HE defends,
And who shall injure? In the perilous den
HE rescu'd Daniel from the lion's mouth!
HIS common deeds are wonders; all HIS works
One ever-during chain of miracles!

Enter ARASPES.

Aras. All hail, O king! Darius, live for ever!
May all thy foes be as Pharnaces is!

Dar. Araspes, speak!

Aras. Oh, let me spare the tale!
'Tis full of horror! Dreadful was the sight!
The hungry lions, greedy for their prey,
Devour'd the wretched princes ere they reach'd
The bottom of the den.

Dar. Now, now confess,
'Twas some superior hand restrain'd their rage,
And tam'd their furious appetites.
People. 'Tis true.
The God of Daniel is a mighty God;
He saves and He destroys.
Aras. O friend! O Daniel!
No wav'ring doubts can ever more disturb
My settled faith.
Dan. To God be all the glory!

REFLECTIONS OF KING HEZEKIAH,

IN HIS SICKNESS.

" Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die." — ISAIAH, xxxviii.

REFLECTIONS OF KING HEZEKIAH,

IN HIS SICKNESS.

WHAT! and no more? — Is this, my soul, said I,
My whole of being? — Must I surely die?
Be robb'd at once of health, of strength, of time,
Of youth's fair promise, and of pleasure's prime?
Shall I no more behold the face of morn,
The cheerful daylight, and the spring's return?
Must I the festive bow'r, the banquet leave,
For the dull chambers of the darksome grave?
Have I consider'd what it is to die?
In native dust with kindred worms to lie!
To sleep in cheerless cold neglect! to rot!
My body loath'd, my very name forgot!
Not one of all those parasites, who bend
The supple knee, their monarch to attend!
What, not one friend! No, not a hireling slave
Shall hail great HEZEKIAH in the grave.
Where's *he*, who falsely claim'd the name of *Great?*
Whose eye was terror, and whose frown was fate?
Who aw'd a hundred nations from the throne!
See where he lies, dumb, friendless, and alone!
Which grain of dust proclaims the noble birth?

Which is the royal particle of earth?
Where are the marks, the princely ensigns where?
Which is the slave, and which great David's heir?
Alas! the beggar's ashes are not known
From his, who lately sat on Israel's throne!
How stands my great account? My soul, survey
The debt ETERNAL JUSTICE bids thee pay!
Should I frail Memory's records strive to blot,
Will Heav'n's tremendous reck'ning be forgot?
Can I, alas, the awful volume tear?
Or rase one page of the dread register?
" *Prepare thy house, thy heart in order set:*
" *Prepare the Judge of Heav'n and Earth to meet.*"
So spake the warning Prophet.— Awful words!
Which fearfully my troubled soul records.
Am I prepar'd? and *can* I meet my doom,
Nor shudder at the dreaded wrath to come?
Is all in order set, my house, my heart?
Does no besetting sin still claim a part?
No cherish'd error loth to quit its place,
Obstruct within my soul the work of grace!
Did I each day for this great day prepare,
By righteous deeds, by sin-subduing pray'r?
Did I each night, each day's offence repent,
And each unholy thought and word lament?
Still have these ready hands th' afflicted fed,
And minister'd to Want her daily bread?
The cause I knew not, did I well explore?
Friend, advocate, and parent of the poor?
Did I, to gratify some sudden gust
Of thoughtless appetite, some impious lust
Of pleasure or of pow'r, such sums employ

As would have flush'd pale penury with joy?
Did I in groves forbidden altars raise,
Or molten gods adore, or idols praise?
Did my firm faith to Heav'n still point the way?
Did Charity to man my actions sway?
Did meek-ey'd Patience all my steps attend?
Did generous Candour mark me for her friend?
Did I unjustly seek to build my name
On the pil'd ruins of another's fame?
Did I abhor, as hell, th' insidious lie,
The low deceit, th' unmanly calumny?
Did my fix'd soul the impious wit detest?
Did my firm virtue scorn the unhallow'd jest;
The sneer profane, and the poor ridicule
Of shallow Infidelity's dull school?
Did I still live as born one day to die,
And view th' eternal world with constant eye?
If so I liv'd, if so I kept thy word,
In mercy view, in mercy hear me, Lord!
For, oh, how strict soe'er I kept thy law,
From mercy only all my hopes I draw;
My holiest deeds *indulgence* will require;
The best but to *forgiveness* will aspire;
If thou my purest services regard,
'Twill be with pardon only, not reward.
How imperfection's stamp'd on all below!
How sin intrudes in all we say or do!
How late in all the insolence of health,
I charm'd th' Assyrian * by my boast of wealth!
How fondly with elab'rate pomp display'd

* This is an anachronism. Hezekiah did not show his treasures to the Assyrian till after his recovery from his sickness.

My glitt'ring treasures! with what triumph laid
My gold and gems before his dazzled eyes,
And found a rich reward in his surprise!
Oh, mean of soul! can wealth elate the heart,
Which of the man himself is not a part!
Oh, poverty of pride! Oh, foul disgrace!
Disgusted Reason, blushing, hides her face.
Mortal, and proud! strange contradicting terms!
Pride for death's victim, for the prey of worms!
Of all the wonders which th' eventful life
Of man presents; of all the mental strife
Of warring passions; all the raging fires
Of furious appetites and mad desires,
Not one so strange appears as this alone,
That man is proud of what is not his own!
How short is human life! the very breath,
Which frames my words, accelerates my death.
Of this short life how large a portion's fled!
To what is gone I am already dead;
As dead to all my years and minutes past,
As I, to what remains, shall be at last:
Can I past miseries so far forget,
To view my vanish'd years with fond regret?
Can I again my worn-out fancy cheat?
Indulge fresh hope? solicit new deceit?
Of all the vanities weak man admires,
Which greatness gives, youth hopes, or pride desires,
Of these, my soul, which hast thou not enjoy'd?
With each, with all, thy sated powers are cloy'd.
What can I then expect from length of days?
More wealth, more wisdom, pleasure, health, or praise?

More pleasure! hope not that, deluded king;
For when did age increase of pleasure bring?
Is health, of years prolong'd the common boast?
And dear-earn'd Fame, is it not cheaply lost?
More Wisdom! that indeed were happiness;
That were a wish a king might well confess:
But when did Wisdom covet length of days?
Or seek its bliss in pleasure, wealth, or praise?
No:— Wisdom views with an indiff'rent eye
All finite joys, all blessings born to die.
The soul on earth is an immortal guest,
Compell'd to starve at an unreal feast:
A spark, which upward tends by nature's force;
A stream diverted from its parent source;
A drop dissever'd from the boundless sea;
A moment, parted from eternity;
A pilgrim panting for the rest to come;
An exile, anxious for his native home.
Why should I ask my forfeit life to save?
Is Heav'n unjust which dooms me to the grave?
Was I with hope of endless days deceiv'd?
Or of lov'd life am I alone bereav'd?
Let all the great, the rich, the learn'd, the wise,
Let all the shades of Judah's monarchs rise,
And say, if genius, learning, empire, wealth,
Youth, beauty, virtue, strength, renown, or health,
Has once revers'd th' immutable decree
On Adam pass'd, of man's mortality?
What — have these eyes ne'er seen the felon worm
The damask cheek devour, the finish'd form?
On the pale rose of blasted beauty feed,
And riot on the lip so lately red?

Where are our fathers? Where th' illustrious line
Of holy prophets, and of seers divine?
Live they for ever? Do they shun the grave?
Or when did wisdom its professor save?
When did the brave escape? When did the breath
Of Eloquence charm the dull ear of Death?
When did the cunning argument avail,
The polish'd period, or the varnish'd tale;
The eye of lightning, or the soul of fire,
Which thronging thousands crowded to admire?
E'en while we praise the verse the poet dies;
And silent as his lyre great David lies.
Thou, blest Isaiah! who, at God's command,
Now speak'st repentance to a guilty land,
Must die! as wise and good thou hadst not been,
As Nebat's son, who taught the land to sin.
And shall I then be spar'd? Oh, monstrous pride!
Shall I escape, when Solomon has died?
If all the worth of all the saints were vain —
Peace, peace, my troubled soul, nor dare complain:
LORD, I submit. Complete thy gracious will;
For if Thou slay me, I will trust Thee still.
Oh! be my will so swallow'd up in thine,
That I may do THY will in doing *mine*.

SENSIBILITY:

AN EPISTLE

TO

THE HONOURABLE MRS. BOSCAWEN.

SENSIBILITY:

AN EPISTLE

TO

THE HONOURABLE MRS. BOSCAWEN.

ACCEPT, BOSCAWEN, these unpolish'd lays,
Nor blame too much the verse you cannot praise.
For you, far other bards have wak'd the string,
Far other bards for you were wont to sing;
Yet on the gale their parting music steals,
Yet your charm'd ear the lov'd impression feels
You heard the lyres of LITTLETON and YOUNG,
And that a Grace, and this a Seraph, strung.
These are no more: but not with these decline
The Attic chasteness or the vig'rous line.
Still, *sad Elfrida's Poet* * shall complain,
Still, either WARTON breathe his classic strain;
While, for the wonders of the Gothic page,
Otranto's fame shall vindicate the age.
Nor tremble lest the tuneful art expire,
While BEATTIE strikes anew old SPENSER's lyre;
He best to paint the genuine minstrel knew,
Who from himself the living portrait drew.

* MILTON calls EURIPIDES *Sad Electra's Poet.*

Though Latian bards had gloried in his name,
When in full brightness burnt the Latian flame;
Yet, fir'd with loftier hopes than transient bays,
See LOWTH * despise the meed of mortal praise;
Spurn the cheap wreath by human science won;
Borne on the wing sublime of AMOS' son:
He seiz'd the mantle as the prophet flew,
And with his mantle caught his spirit too.

To snatch bright beauty from devouring fate,
And lengthen Nature's transitory date;
At once the Critic's and the Painter's art,
With FRESNOY's skill, and GUIDO's grace impart;
To form with code correct the graphic school,
And lawless fancy curb by sober rule;
To show how genius fires, how taste restrains,
While, what both are, his pencil best explains,
Have we not REYNOLDS? † lives not JENYNS yet,
To prove his lowest title was a wit? ‡

Though purer flames thy hallow'd zeal inspire
Than ere were kindled at the Muse's fire;
Thee, mitred CHESTER! § all the Nine shall boast;
And is not JOHNSON ours? himself an host.

* Then Bishop of London.

† See Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS's very able notes to DU FRESNOY'S Poem on the Art of Painting, translated by Mr. MASON. — Also, his series of *Discourses to the Academy;* which, though written professedly on the subject of Painting, contain the principles of general art, and are delivered with so much perspicuous good sense, as to be admirably calculated to assist in forming the taste of the general reader.

‡ Mr. SOAME JENYNS had just published his work "*On the internal Evidence of the Christian Religion.*"

§ Afterwards Bishop of London. — See his admirable Poem on Death.

Yes, still for you your gentle stars dispense
The charm of friendship and the feast of sense:
Yours is the bliss, and Heav'n no dearer sends,
To call the wisest, brightest, best, your friends.
And while to thee I raise the votive line,
O let me grateful own these friends are mine;
With CARTER trace the wit to Athens known,
Or view in MONTAGU that wit our own;
Or mark, well pleas'd, CHAPONE's instructive page,
Intent to raise the morals of the age:
Or boast, in WALSINGHAM, the various power
To cheer the lonely, grace the letter'd hour;
DELANEY, too, is ours; serenely bright,
Wisdom's strong ray, and virtue's milder light:
And she who bless'd the friend, and grac'd the lays
Of poignant SWIFT, still gilds our social days;
Long, long, protract thy light, O star benign!
Whose setting beams with milder lustre shine.

Nor BARBAULD, shall my glowing heart refuse
Its tribute to thy virtues, or thy Muse:
This humble merit shall at least be mine,
The Poet's chaplet for thy brow to twine;
My verse thy talents to the world shall teach,
And praise the genius it despairs to reach.

Yet what is wit, and what the Poet's art?
Can genius shield the vulnerable heart?
Ah, no! where bright imagination reigns,
The fine-wrought spirit feels acuter pains;
Where glow exalted sense and taste refin'd,
There keener anguish rankles in the mind;
There, feeling is diffus'd through every part,
Thrills in each nerve, and lives in all the heart;

And those, whose gen'rous souls each tear would keep
From others' eyes, are born themselves to weep.
Can all the boasted powers of wit and song,
Of life one pang remove, one hour prolong?
Fallacious hope! which daily truths deride;
For you, alas! have wept, and GARRICK died!
O shades of Hampton! witness, as I mourn,
Could wit or song elude your fav'rite's urn?
Though living virtue still your haunts endears,
Yet buried worth shall justify my tears.
Who now with spirit keen, yet judgment cool,
The errors of my orphan Muse shall rule?
With keen acumen, how his piercing eye
The fault, conceal'd from vulgar view, would spy;
While with a gen'rous warmth he strove to hide,
Nay, vindicate, the fault his taste had spied.
So pleas'd, could he detect a happy line
That he would fancy merit e'en in mine.
His wit so pointed, it ne'er miss'd its end,
And so well temper'd, it ne'er lost a friend;
How his keen eye, quick mind, and ardent heart,
Impov'rish'd nature, and exhausted art.
A *Muse of fire* has sung*, if Muse could trace,
Or verse retrieve, the evanescent grace,
How rival bards with rival statesmen strove,
Who most should gain his praise, or win his love:
Opposing parties to one point he drew,
Thus TULLY'S Atticus was CÆSAR'S too.
Tho' Time his mellowing hand across has stole,
Soft'ning the tints of sorrow on the soul,

* See Mr. SHERIDAN'S beautiful Monody.

The deep impression long my heart shall fill,
And ev'ry fainter trace be perfect still.
Forgive, my friend, if wounded mem'ry melt,
You best can pardon who have deepest felt.
You, who for Britain's Hero* and your own
The deadliest pang which rends the soul have known;
You, who have found how much the feeling heart
Shapes its own wound, and points itself the dart;
You, who are call'd the varied loss to mourn;
You, who have clasp'd a son's untimely urn;
You, who from frequent fond experience feel
The wounds such minds receive can never heal;
That grief a thousand entrances can find,
Where parts superior dignify the mind;
Yet would you change that sense acute to gain
A dear-bought absence from the poignant pain;
Commuting every grief those feelings give,
In loveless, joyless apathy to live?
For though in souls where energies abound,
Pain, through its num'rous avenues, can wound;
Yet the same avenues are open still,
To casual blessings as to casual ill.
Nor is the trembling temper more awake
To every wound calamity can make,
Than is the finely-fashion'd nerve alive
To every transport pleasure has to give.
Let not the vulgar read this pensive strain,
Their jests the tender anguish would profane.
Yet these some deem the happiest of their kind,
Whose low enjoyments never reach the mind;

* Admiral Boscawen.

Who ne'er a pain but for themselves have known,
Who ne'er have felt a sorrow but their own;
Who deem romantic every finer thought
Conceiv'd by pity, or by friendship wrought;
Whose insulated souls ne'er feel the pow'r
Of gen'rous sympathy's ecstatic hour;
Whose disconnected hearts ne'er taste the bliss
Extracted from another's happiness;
Who ne'er the high heroic duty know,
For public good the private to forego.
Then wherefore happy? Where's the kindred mind?
Where the large soul which takes in human kind?
Yes — 'tis the untold sorrow to explain,
To mitigate the but suspected pain;
The rule of holy sympathy to keep,
Joy for the joyful, tears for them that weep:
To these the virtuous half their pleasures owe,
Pleasures the selfish are not born to know;
They never know, in all their coarser bliss,
The sacred rapture of a pain like this:
Then take, ye happy vulgar, take your part
Of sordid joy which never touch'd the heart.
Benevolence, which seldom stays to choose,
Lest pausing prudence tempt her to refuse;
Friendship, which once determin'd never swerves,
Weighs ere it trusts, but weighs not ere it serves;
And soft-ey'd pity, and forgiveness bland,
And melting *charity with open hand*;
And artless love, believing and believ'd,
And honest confidence which ne'er deceiv'd;
And mercy stretching out ere want can speak,
To wipe the tear which stains affliction's cheek:

These ye have never known — then take your part
Of sordid joy, which never touch'd the heart.
You, who have melted in bright glory's flame,
Or felt the grateful breath of well-earn'd fame;
Or you, the chosen agents from above,
Whose bounty vindicates Almighty love;
You, who subdue the vain desire of show,
Not to accumulate but to bestow;
You, who the dreary haunts of sorrow seek,
Raise the sunk heart, and flush the fading cheek;
You, who divide the joys and share the pains,
When merit triumphs, or oppress'd, complains;
You, who with pensive Petrarch love to mourn,
Or weave the garland for Tibullus' urn;
You, whose touch'd hearts with real sorrows swell,
Or feel, when genius paints those sorrows well;
Would you renounce such energies as these
For vulgar pleasures or for selfish ease?
Would you, to 'scape the pain, the joy forego,
And miss the transport to avoid the woe?
Would you the sense of actual pity lose,
And cease to share the mournings of the Muse?
No, GREVILLE *, no! Thy song, though steep'd in tears,
Though all thy soul in all thy strain appears;
Yet wouldst thou all thy well-sung anguish choose,
And all th' inglorious peace thou begg'st refuse.
And while Discretion all our views should guide,
Beware, lest secret aims and ends she hide;
Though midst the crowd of virtues, 'tis her part,
Like a firm sentinel, to guard the heart;

* See her beautiful Ode to Indifference.

Beware, lest Prudence self become unjust,
Who never was deceiv'd, I would not trust;
Prudence must never be suspicion's slave,
The world's wise man is more than half a knave.
And you, BOSCAWEN, while you fondly melt
In raptures none but mothers ever felt;
And as you view, prophetic, in your race,
All LEVISON's sweetness, and all BEAUFORT's grace;
Yet dread what dangers each lov'd child may share,
The youth, if valiant, or the maid, if fair;
You who have felt, so frail is mortal joy!
That, while we clasp the phantom, we destroy;
That perils multiply as blessings flow,
That sorrows grafted on enjoyments grow;
That clouds impending dim our brightest views,
That who have most to love have most to lose:
Yet from these fair possessions would you part,
To shelter from contingent ills your heart?
Would you forego the objects of your prayer
To save the dangers of a distant care?
Renounce the brightness op'ning to your view,
For all the safety dulness ever knew?
Would you consent to shun the fears you prove,
That they should merit less, or you less love?
Yet while we claim the sympathy divine,
Which makes, O man, the woes of others thine;
While her fair triumphs swell the modish page,
She drives the sterner virtues from the stage;
While FEELING boasts her ever-tearful eye,
Fair truth, firm faith, and manly justice fly:
Justice, prime good! from whose prolific law,
All worth, all virtue, their strong essence draw.

Justice, a grace quite obsolete, we hold
The feign'd Astrea of an age of gold:
The sterling attribute we scarcely own,
While spurious Candour fills the vacant throne.
Sweet SENSIBILITY! Thou secret pow'r
Who shedd'st thy gifts upon the natal hour,
Like fairy favours; art can never seize,
Nor affectation catch thy pow'r to please:
Thy subtle essence still eludes the chains
Of definition, and defeats her pains.
Sweet SENSIBILITY! thou keen delight!
Unprompted moral! sudden sense of right!
Perception exquisite! fair virtue's seed!
Thou quick precursor of the lib'ral deed!
Thou hasty conscience! reason's blushing morn!
Instinctive kindness e'er reflection's born!
Prompt sense of equity! to thee belongs
The swift redress of unexamin'd wrongs:
Eager to serve, the cause perhaps untried,
But always apt to choose the suff'ring side;
To those who know thee not no words can paint,
And those who know thee, know all words are faint.
She does not feel thy pow'r who boasts thy flame,
And rounds her every period with thy name;
Nor she who vents her disproportion'd sighs
With pining *Lesbia*, when her sparrow dies;
Nor she who melts when hapless *Shore* expires,
While real mis'ry unreliev'd retires!
Who thinks feign'd sorrows all her tears deserve,
And weeps o'er WERTER, while her children starve.
As words are but th' external marks to tell
The fair ideas in the mind that dwell;

And only are of things the outward sign,
And not the things themselves they but define;
So exclamations, tender tones, fond tears,
And all the graceful drap'ry FEELING wears;
These are her garb, not her, they but express
Her form, her semblance, her appropriate dress;
And these fair marks, reluctant I relate,
These lovely symbols may be counterfeit.
There are, who fill with brilliant plaints the page,
If a poor linnet meet the gunner's rage;
There are, who for a dying fawn deplore,
As if friend, parent, country, were no more;
Who boast, quick rapture trembling in their eye,
If from the spider's snare they snatch a fly;
There are, whose well-sung plaints each breast inflame,
And break all hearts — but his from whom they came.
He, scorning life's low duties to attend,
Writes odes on friendship, while he cheats his friend;
Of gaols and punishments he grieves to hear,
And pensions prison'd virtue with a tear;
While unpaid bills his creditor presents,
And ruin'd innocence his crime laments.
Not so the tender moralist of Tweed,
His gen'rous *Man of Feeling* feels indeed.
O LOVE DIVINE! sole source of Charity!
More dear one genuine deed perform'd for thee,
Than all the periods FEELING e'er could turn,
Than all thy touching page, perverted STERNE.
Not that by deeds alone this love's express'd,
If so, the affluent only were the bless'd;
One silent wish, one pray'r, one soothing word,
The page of mercy shall, well pleas'd, record;

One soul-felt sigh by pow'rless pity giv'n,
Accepted incense, shall ascend to heav'n.
Since trifles make the sum of human things,
And half our mis'ry from our foibles springs;
Since life's best joys consist in peace and ease,
And though but few can serve, yet all may please:
O let th' ungentle spirit learn from hence,
A small unkindness is a great offence.
To spread large bounties though we wish in vain,
Yet all may shun the guilt of giving pain:
To bless mankind with tides of flowing wealth,
With rank to grace them or to crown with health,
Our little lot denies; yet, lib'ral still,
Heav'n gives its counterpoise to every ill;
Nor let us murmur at our stinted pow'rs,
When kindness, love, and concord, may be ours.
The gift of minist'ring to others' ease,
To all her sons impartial she decrees;
The gentle offices of patient love,
Beyond all flatt'ry, and all price above;
The mild forbearance at a brother's fault,
The angry word suppress'd, the taunting thought;
Subduing and subdu'd, the petty strife,
Which clouds the colour of domestic life;
The sober comfort, all the peace which springs
From the large aggregate of little things;
On these small cares of daughter, wife, or friend,
The almost sacred joys of *Home* depend:
There, SENSIBILITY, thou best may'st reign,
HOME is thy true legitimate domain.
A solitary bliss thou ne'er could'st find,
Thy joys with those thou lov'st are intertwin'd;

'And he, whose helpful tenderness removes
The rankling thorn which wounds the breast he loves,
Smooths not another's rugged path alone,
But clears th' obstruction which impedes his own.
The hint malevolent, the look oblique,
The obvious satire, or implied dislike;
The sneer equivocal, the harsh reply,
And all the cruel language of the eye;
The artful injury, whose venom'd dart
Scarce wounds the hearing, while it stabs the heart;
The guarded phrase, whose meaning kills, yet told,
The list'ner wonders how you thought it cold;
Small slights, neglect, unmixt perhaps with hate,
Make up in number what they want in weight.
These, and a thousand griefs minute as these,
Corrode our comfort and destroy our ease.
As FEELING tends to good or leans to ill,
It gives fresh force to vice or principle;
'Tis not a gift peculiar to the good,
'Tis often but the virtue of the blood:
And what would seem compassion's moral flow,
Is but a circulation swift or slow:
But to divert it to its proper course,
There wisdom's pow'r appears, there reason's force:
If, ill directed, it pursue the wrong,
It adds new strength to what before was strong;
Breaks out in wild irregular desires,
Disorder'd passions, and illicit fires;
Without deforms the man, depraves within,
And makes the work of GOD the slave of sin.
But if RELIGION's bias rule the soul,
Then SENSIBILITY exalts the whole;

Sheds its sweet sunshine on the moral part,
Nor wastes on fancy what should warm the heart.
Cold and inert the mental pow'rs would lie,
Without this quick'ning spark of Deity.
To melt the rich materials from the mine,
To bid the mass of intellect refine,
To bend the firm, to animate the cold,
And Heav'n's own image stamp on nature's gold;
To give immortal MIND its finest tone,
O SENSIBILITY! is all thy own.
This is th' ethereal flame which lights and warms,
In song enchants us, and in action charms.
'Tis this that makes the pensive strains of GRAY *
Win to the open heart their easy way;
Makes the touch'd spirit glow with kindred fire,
When sweet Serena's poet wakes the lyre:
Makes PORTLAND's face its brightest rapture wear,
When her large bounty smooths the bed of care;
'Tis this that breathes through SEVIGNE's fair page
That nameless grace which soothes a second age;
'Tis this whose charms the soul resistless seize,
And gives BOSCAWEN half her pow'r to please.
Yet why those terrors? Why that anxious care,
Since your last hope † the deathful war *will* dare?
Why dread that energy of soul which leads
To dang'rous glory by heroic deeds?

* This is meant of the *Elegy in a Country Church-Yard*, of which exquisite poem *Sensibility* is, perhaps, the characteristic beauty.

† Viscount FALMOUTH, Admiral BOSCAWEN's only remaining son, was then in America, and at the battle of Lexington.

Why mourn to view his ardent soul aspire?
You fear the son because you knew the sire.
Hereditary valour you deplore,
And dread, yet wish to find one hero more.

BIBLE RHYMES,

ON

THE NAMES OF ALL THE BOOKS

OF THE

Old and New Testament:

WITH

ALLUSIONS TO SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL

INCIDENTS AND CHARACTERS.

As a homely digger may show a man a rich mine, so whatever the Book may be which is *presented* to you, that which I *recommend* to you is a *matchless* one.

Hon. Robert Boyle's *Preface to the Style of the Holy Scriptures.*

THESE RHYMES

ARE AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

BY ONE WHO, HAVING LONG BEEN ANXIOUS FOR

THEIR HIGHEST INTERESTS,

CANNOT CONSULT THEM BETTER,

THAN BY EARNESTLY RECOMMENDING TO THEIR

SERIOUS AND DAILY PERUSAL,

THAT SACRED VOLUME,

EMPHATICALLY CALLED

THE BOOK.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

AN apology is due to the purchasers of the First Edition of this slight piece, for the large additions made to the present. The First Edition was sent to the press so hastily, owing to the Author's bad state of health, that till she saw it in print, she was not fully sensible of its deficiencies.

The Author had originally no intention of offering this trifle to the public; but some friends who saw the original manuscript suggested, that at a time when such insidious attempts were making by the industry of impiety, to corrupt the principles, and to alienate the minds of youth altogether from the study and belief of the Holy Scriptures, this little publication might not be wholly useless or unseasonable.

She is well aware that many important characters, many striking facts, many engaging histories, might have been additionally introduced, and the little volume had been thus rendered less imperfect. But having in an early attempt to treat on sacred subjects* introduced many of the most interesting characters and incidents of the Old Testament, they are here frequently omitted, or more superficially touched on.

* See Sacred Dramas, and Reflections of King Hezekiah.

With a hope to excite an increasing interest in the Bible, by inducing the readers to search it for themselves, the writer has generally forborne to make any particular reference to the specific chapter or verse to which the different passages allude. To increase their admiration of the Word of God by such research, is her fervent desire; and this more especially at a period when, by so many recent attacks, its truth is impugned, its authority denied, its doctrines vilified, and the characters it exhibits viewed with abhorrence, or treated with ridicule.

The familiar measure here adopted is very unfavourable to the subject. The author never remembers to have seen a serious poem written in it except hymns; and even hymns, besides being short, are generally in the quatrain stanza; which, by making the rhyme alternate, gives greater room for elevation in the diction, and expansion of the thought, both of which, the measure here used is calculated to cramp and contract.

This trifle was intended for little more than a *Catalogue Raisonné* of the *names* of the *books* of the Bible; the subject, it is true, admits of little poetical embellishment, even were the Author better qualified to bestow it. Indeed the dignity of the Sacred Volume is so commanding, its superiority to all other compositions so decided, that it never gains any thing by human infusions: paraphrase dilutes it, amplification weakens, imitation debases, parody profanes.

Much more latitude is given in the Old than in the New Testament. The latter consists chiefly of

fact and doctrine. It has less imagery; it exhibits a more explicit rule of faith; a more spiritualised code of morals; it is more specifically didactic. On this holy ground, therefore, we must tread with peculiar caution; because here every article of faith is definite; every rule of practice is established; the scheme of salvation is completed: so that all who enlarge on it must carefully avoid the awful sentence denounced on those who add to, or take from, what is written.

Barley Wood,
August 14. 1822.

THE

OLD TESTAMENT.

INTRODUCTION.

HERE the first history of mankind
From its first origin we find;
God is its author, truth its name,
Salvation all its end and aim:
Here we are shown "the good old way,"
First to believe, and then obey.
God's Spirit dictates; men proclaim
The doctrines as from him they came.
And not by miracles alone,
By prophecy, the truth is shown.
Though 'tis no scheme for dry dispute,
No scene to wrangle and confute;
Not an arena for debate,
A field for harsh polemic hate;
Yet strict enquiry may be mov'd,
The more 'tis search'd the more 'tis prov'd.
It is a boon by mercy given,
That man may gain some taste of heaven;
Best medicine for the sin-sick soul,
For guilty passions best controul;
To all, its precepts are applied,
The rich man's guard, the poor man's guide;

To fill with gratitude the hearts
Where God his larger gifts imparts;
To cheer with higher hopes the poor,
To teach the suff'rer to endure;
The meek to raise, repress the bold,
To warn the young, to wean the old;
The arms it lends are faith and prayer,
Its fruits, oblivion sweet of care.
Here are the only precepts given
For peace on earth, or rest in heaven.
Sole lesson since the world began,
For fear of God and love to man:
It came with blessings in its train,
Which to recount, the attempt were vain.
It came to hinder fell despair,
The ravages of sin repair;
It came to cheer the contrite heart,
Redemption's wonders to impart;
That he who sins should sin no more;
It came — a lost world to restore.

PART THE FIRST.

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS, PSALMS, PROVERBS, AND ECCLESIASTES.

THE PENTATEUCH.

THE first five books for author claim
Moses, and Pentateuch their name.
In GENESIS, which first we call,
Is man's creation, and his fall.
But soon to Adam came the word
That rebel man should be restor'd.
Yet, though the gracious promise came,
The first-born bore a murderer's name.
See the whole world by flood expire,
The cities of the plain by fire!
You ask, perhaps, "Who slew all these?"
'Twas sin, the original disease!
From Adam the infection ran,
In downward course from man to man,
Though all who draw the vital breath
Must pay the penalty of death,
Yet one * immortal pair we see;
Pledge of *our* immortality!

* Elijah and Enoch.

Enoch, in a corrupted time,
Bequeath'd to us this truth sublime:
God's service is not merely talk,
The man of God with God must *walk*;
From general laws immunity
He found, for Enoch did not die;
"God took him!" O emphatic word!
No more was needful to record.
The world grew worse as old it grew,
Sin, gathering strength, grew bolder too.
Long-suffering patience now was past,
The appalling sentence comes at last;
"My Spirit shall not always strive,
"No further respite will I give."
God bids a refuge straight prepare
For those his goodness meant to spare.
Blest Noah, and his favour'd race,
Alone obtain the special grace.
A picture of *our* world remark,
In those who labour'd in the ark;
A stronger instance need we find
Of the hard heart of base mankind?
Howe'er assiduously they wrought,
No builder his *own* safety sought;
A cent'ry was the task pursu'd,
Not one his *own* destruction view'd:
Oh, blind, God's menac'd blow to slight!
What! perish with the ark in sight?
See God his awful threat'ning keep,
Break up the fountains of the deep;
Remove the limits long assign'd
Th' encroaching waters fast to bind!

Heav'n's windows open; lo, the sky
Pours down its deluge from on high!
The floods that rise, the floods that fall,
Meet at one point and cover all:
All cry, none aid; with anguish wild
The frantic mother grasps her child.
The weak their safety seek below,
The rapid waves above them flow;
The strong attempt the mountain's steep,
The mountains are become the deep.
Half dead with famine, half with fear,
Now few, and fewer now, appear!
All strive, all sink — sink beasts and men;
Perish'd each living substance then.
Existence is extinct! — the world
Itself to dire destruction hurl'd.
Good Noah's house alone remain'd;
The waves his floating ark sustain'd.
There *is* an ark that's open still,
Where all may shelter if they will.
Awful, indeed, if Christians too
Should perish with *their* ark in view!
But if the moral plague abound,
Yet still some righteous men were found;
Righteous, not perfect, you may see
Throughout mankind's long history;
As stars in darkness seem more bright,
So these illume the moral night.
See Abraham full of faith and grace,
Sire of the patriarchal race!
To Isaac turn your wond'ring eyes,
Prefiguring the great Sacrifice!

What Abraham felt, fond parents, say,
Himself his only son must slay!
Though much he moürn'd, for much he lov'd,
His faith his prompt obedience prov'd:
What dauntless faith those words implied,
"God will himself a lamb provide!"
Joseph, the virtuous, next behold,
Like Christ by his own brethren sold:
The pit, the prison, all unite,
To make his character more bright:
Whence came that strength which could sustain him,
From tempting pleasure's snares restrain him?
Could make the prison, pit, and court,
To him alike a safe resort?
What made him thus unyielding stand?
His God was still at his right hand!
Religion was to him a law;
He knew the Omnipresent saw:
No secresy his soul can win,
No fancied safety tempt to sin:
Omniscience sees the skulking shame,
Darkness and light to God the same!

Now Exodus records the story
Of Pharaoh's crimes and Moses' glory:
A splendid court his favour'd lot,
He ne'er sad Israel's woes forgot.
What wealth, what grandeur could dispense,
The charms of ease, the baits of sense,
Were his; nor sensual pleasures move,
Nor wealth nor grandeur wins his love.

With what magnanimous disdain
Of sin he spurn'd the alluring train;
Abounding in Almighty grace,
He *chose* to suffer with his race:
He saw God's hand sustain him still,
Saw HIM who is invisible.
We pass unhappy Israel's woes,
Her bondage midst insulting foes.
The iron scourge the captives felt,
The harden'd monarch could not melt:
In his peculiar plagues we see
God's judgments on idolatry.
The blinded land, though warn'd in time,
Persisted in the impious crime.
Jehovah's indignation burned,
And into *plagues* their *idols* turned;
He made the due inflictions sent,
Their just, appropriate punishment.
The living God, whom they withstood,
The Nile they worshipp'd turn'd to blood.
Behold, in this polluted tide
The fish they consecrated died.
The fish, the frog, as whim invites,
Usurp by turns old Nilus' rights.
Successive plagues of reptiles vile
Sprung from this master idol, Nile.
Well did the Grecian satirist * choose
Such subjects for his taunting muse.
See, quoth the bard, in Egypt rise
Temples all glorious to the eyes!

* Lucian.

The outside fair, dimensions true,
And towers elaborate strike the view;
But enter, and within you see
Vile objects of idolatry:
The God on whom they fondly doat,
A crane, a cat, an ape, a goat.
Though wisdom once was Egypt's boast,
In types and fables truth was lost:
Hence in his Law we see the Lord
Denounce so plainly things abhorr'd.
And hence Ezekiel's vision sings
That beasts obscene, and creeping things,
Idols become: hence let us learn
Almighty wisdom to discern;
God no prohibitory law
Had made, where he no evil saw;
What marvel the Commandment's breach
To "heaven, and earth, and sea," should reach:
From God's discriminating hand
Springs no unmeaning, vain command.
In Egypt, needless 'tis to tell,
Rain was itself a miracle:
The elements they worship, turn
To swift destruction, drown, or burn.
"In fires which ran along the ground,"
Another idol may be found.
The sun, opposing nature's laws,
Three days, at God's command, withdraws.
Shrouded three days in blackest night
Lay Egypt: Israel's tents were light.
Could the magicians' arts expel
The plagues which thick, and thicker fell?

Could priests avert the direful harms
By incantations, spells, and charms?
The priests themselves, who felt the rod,
Exclaimed, "This is the work of God!"
The Lord alone, by Moses' hand,
Could heal the miseries of the land.
Can God inflict, when men displease,
Calamities more dread than these?
In one sad night of vengeance sent,
Th' extirminating angel went.
See the commissioned spirit stand,
Hurl his swift arrows through the land.
The cries of agony resound;
One dead in every house is found.
The shrieking parent, childless left,
Flies to his neighbour; he, bereft
Alike, no comfort has to give,
No eldest born that night might live.
The peasant and the prince alike
The darts of the destroyer strike.
Saved by the heaven-appointed blood,
Israel alone uninjured stood;
Then, when the Paschal lamb they shared,
Th' *Atoning Antitype* appeared.
The speaking emblem shadowed forth
The sacrifice of countless worth.
Loins girt, feet shod, and staff in hand,
May *we* too seek the promised land;
But bear in mind it must be *won*
Before possession's entered on.
See Moses, at the Lord's command,
By faith forsake th' oppressor's land;

Escaped the snares by Pharaoh spread,
The numerous phalanx forth he led.
Mark on the margin how they stand;
Behold they cross the sea by land;
God's mighty power is seen once more,
Oh, miracle! they reach the shore.
Egypt pursues, the ocean braves,
They rush between the parted waves;
Back to their course the waves retreat,
Again the refluent waters meet.
If Egypt's shrieks are mix'd with prayer,
They pray to gods who cannot hear:
See Egypt sink, ingulf'd their host,
The rider and his horse are lost.
Israel, unworthy of the boon,
Forgets the wondrous rescue soon:
Sav'd, not converted; — discontent
Defeats the mighty blessings sent.
By miracle they still were fed,
From heaven receiv'd their daily bread;
Yet murmur'd at the bounteous hand
Which fed them in that desert land:
Yet *we*, these pilgrims while we blame,
And cast reproach on Israel's name;
To murmur, too, we sometimes dare,
Though we have bread to eat, and spare.
Moses! thy parting song sublime,
Shall outlive worlds, and bury time.
No hallow'd bard, whate'er his worth,
E'er pour'd more warm effusions forth.
O'er Israel's sin how does he sigh,
His God, his Rock, how glorify:

" Attend — the awful truth I sing,
" Is no indifferent, no vain thing;
" It is your life, your hope, your all;
" God is the Lord; obey his call:
" In vain for molten gods you strive,
" 'Tis I that kill, that make alive.
" Fountain of Jacob, just and true,
" Thou waterest earth with heavenly dew:
" From Thee descend the corn and wine,
" All health, all gifts, all grace is thine."
Then pouring the rich blessing round,
He shows them where true rest is found:
" Oh, people sav'd, adore the Lord,
" Shield of thy help, celestial sword!
" Approach, abide, secure from harms,
" Safe in the everlasting arms.
" Beneath that panoply divine,
" Oh! save us, Lord! for we are thine."

LEVITICUS the law proclaims,
And brands two * sacrilegious names.
The Gospel truth this book must own,
Anticipating Christ unknown.
Such types through the Old Scriptures run,
And, like the shadow, prove the sun.

NUMBERS the Hebrews' names declare
In due arrangement, just and fair:
The nomenclature so exact,
Not deists can disprove the fact.

* Nadab and Abihu.

While DEUTERONOMY repeats
That law, of which the other treats;
Enlarges on the important theme;
With Moses' death completes the scheme.
Whate'er the weeping Jews desired,
Moses no sepulchre required;
Embalmed in his own works, his name
Scorns the poor meed of temporal fame.

See JOSHUA, type of Jesus, stand,
Fighting for Canaan's promis'd land!

While JUDGES learn'd their wisdom bring,
Before the Jews demand a king.
Well may the weaker sex rejoice
At Deborah's hymn, and Hannah's voice.
The raptures of triumphant song
To Deborah's splendid ode belong.
The contrite prayer, the prostrate mind,
In Hannah's softer strains we find.
The Prophetess, beneath the shade
Of palms, her loud hosannas paid.
In *this* the patriot strikes the strings,
In *that* the holy matron sings.
Her orisons in silence framed,
The erring Eli rashly blamed;
Accused of what she most abhorred,
She vex'd the priest, but pleased the Lord.
Each saint, though different are her gifts,
Her heart with equal fervour lifts.
Elkanah's exemplary wife
Adorned the sphere of private life.

See Deborah, with high-soaring soul,
The tide of public vice control.
She summons princes to rejoice,
Judges and kings to hear her voice.
To Israel's unattending ears
With tongue oracular, declares
They owe the close of war's alarm
Alone to an Almighty arm:
Shows them all victory is from God;
Shows how magnificent he trod
When Sinai's heights his voice rebound,
And mountains melted at the sound;
How Edom trembled from its base,
And thunders shook the astonish'd place.
Who could th' appalling lightnings bear
If *Moses* said, "I quake and fear?"
Deborah! thy song's high tone is such,
I venerate, but dare not touch;
I would not do thee such a wrong,
To mar thy sanctimonious song.
From thy immortal hymn we learn
Conquest's best uses to discern:
When wars a guilty land invade,
What promises, what prayers, are made;
When peace extends her olive wand
To raise and bless the guilty land,
In the warm flush of recent joy,
What thanks, what vows our lips employ!
'Tis not enough, that feast and song
The gratulating strain prolong;
But open temples homage pay,
And chant the tributary lay.

The crowds the cry symphonious raise,
And heaven accepts the grateful praise.
And, oh! that favour'd Britain now
Would so fulfil *her* fervent vow,
That God might with his blessing crown
The prayer, and a chang'd people own.
This were the method to secure
A solid peace which might endure.
That late posterity may say,
When they our happier times survey,
In England's annals it appears
"The land had rest for forty years."

God's tender care of pious youth
Is sweetly seen in past'ral RUTH:
Here filial piety is found,
And with its promis'd blessing crown'd.

SAMUEL, the child of many tears,
The child of promise and of prayers;
Ere on thy birth the mother smil'd,
To God she dedicates her child.
How many, when the blessing's gain'd,
Forget the mercy prayer obtain'd.
Not so our saint; possession paid
The holy vow which sorrow made.
Hail, venerable seer! of all
The prophets, thine the earliest call.
Through life his godly course he ran,
The boy predictive of the man.
The Judge, the Prophet, and the Sage,
Corrected, serv'd, and rul'd the age.

With conscience void of all offence,
Like Paul, he pleads his innocence:
" What orphan have I e'er bereav'd,
" What frauds employ'd, what bribes receiv'd?
" Whom have I wrong'd, or whom oppress'd,
" What grievance left I unredress'd?"
Blest Britain! who, like Israel, claims
Judges of upright ends and aims;
Such may our country ever see,
Judges of stainless purity!
Duteous submission shall *we* grudge,
Where the laws govern ev'n the judge?
Good Samuel, as the Lord appoints,
The king, so loudly ask'd, anoints;
With sorrow deep th' historian brings
Succession sad of Israel's KINGS;

And CHRONICLES prolongs the story,
So little to the royal glory:
Though some were faithful, just, and true,
We grieve to say they were but few.

No prophet on the rolls of fame
Eclipses great ELIJAH's name;
Impelled by faith, disdaining fear,
To kings and priests alike sincere.
The altar once on Carmel built
To God, proclaims th' apostates' guilt.
'Twas there th' illustrious Tishbite, born
On Baal to pour indignant scorn,
With keenest irony maintains
His power divine, in heaven who reigns;

Contemns, as round the trench he trod,
Their talking, sleeping, journeying god.
To heaven behold him still aspire,
Then reach it in a car of fire.

EZRA deserves immortal praise,
Who sought the Temple's walls to raise.

How shall I NEHEMIAH paint,
The courtier, patriot, and the saint?

In ESTHER, Providence displays,
To us inscrutable, his ways;
Here the fair queen with modest grace
Obtains protection for her race:
The oppress'd from hence a lesson draws
Of courage in a righteous cause;
And here, the snares for virtue spread,
Return to plague th' inventor's head.

JOB, on his dunghill, far more great
Than when he dwelt in regal state:
He heard, before, Jehovah's grace,
But now, he sees him face to face;
Meekly he bow'd before his God,
He felt the smart, but kiss'd the rod.
"In me, great God, complete thy will;
"Slay me, and I will trust Thee still."
To Scripture's elder bards belong
The lofty tone of sacred song:
The noblest thoughts of power divine,
Throughout th' Arabian poet shine.

If moon and stars, though sailing seen
In radiance through the blue serene,
If these celestial orbs so bright
Want purity in God's pure sight,
Lord, what is man, corruption's heir,
That he, a worm, thy love should share?
When on God's glories Job dilates *,
His goodness lauds, his grandeur states;
On infinite perfection dwells,
And crowns the glory which excels;
Exhausts description to proclaim
The glories which surround his name;
Oppress'd he sinks beneath the blaze.
" These are but parts of God's deep ways,"
He cries: if parts o'erwhelm the soul,
Oh! who could stand the amazing whole?
Maker Omnipotent! First Cause!
Author of being! Source of laws!
Shall He who gave creation birth
Not govern, as He made the earth?
Shall not the worlds be ordered still
By Him who fram'd them at his will?
Methinks this vast terrestrial ball
If self-supported needs must fall:
Yet He, to teach whom man pretends,
On nothing this great globe suspends.
But if, inscrutable to man,
Lies hid creation's wondrous plan;
If to Himself th' Almightiest keep
Secrets for mortal ken too deep;
If, in eternity made fast,
His schemes lie hid from first to last;

* Job, chap. xxvi.

If depths stupendous are confin'd,
Reposing in th' Eternal Mind;
If hidden things to God belong,
To finite creatures where's the wrong?
Still there's a knowledge He imparts,
And stamps it deep on human hearts;
Still his divine compassions teach
Things useful, things within our reach;
Hear Him explicitly declare
'Tis thine, O man, thy God to fear:
Where'er this filial fear is found,
Man builds on safe, substantial ground;
A conscience guiltless of offence,
Will follow as its consequence.
This is the wisdom taught by me,
The wisdom I require of thee.
Cease to explore my Sovereign plan,
The *moral* science is for man.
Not thine to know or to dispense
The secrets of my Providence:
Ascend not to the heavens unknown,
To bring the mighty mysteries down.
The Solar beam emits no light,
Which proves more clearly noon is bright,
Than my plain WORD presents to view,
All that man needs to KNOW or DO.
Wrapt up in majesty divine,
The rest is not his care but mine.
This the best knowledge man receives,
" I know that my Redeemer lives."

Is it a seraph strikes the strings?
Or is it royal David sings?

Thy PSALMS divinely bring to view,
Jesus, thy root and offspring too.
Mark, how the author's hallow'd lays
Begin with prayer, and end with praise!
Commerce, how sure! which, while it gives
Due payment, rich returns receives;
As tides, which from the shore recede,
Return to fill the native bed;
So praise, which we to God impart,
Comes back in blessings to the heart.
Gainful return, to man when given
Such interchange 'twixt earth and heaven!
As long as inborn sin is felt,
Or penitence in tears shall melt;
As long as Satan shall molest,
Or anguish rend the human breast;
As long as prayer its voice shall raise,
Or gratitude ascend in praise;
So long GOD'S POET shall impart
A balm to every broken heart;
So long the fainting spirit cheer,
And save the contrite from despair.
To Sion's bard it shall be given
To join th' immortal choir in heaven;
And when with theirs his accents float,
He shall not need to change his note.
Though due this tributary praise,
One sin embitter'd all his days.
The prudent prophet chose the veil
Of fiction for the bloody tale;
The tale enrag'd the blinded king:
"The man shall die who did this thing!"

THOU art the man! — the appalling word
Cuts deeper than a two-edged sword;
All self-deceit is put to flight,
Scar'd conscience re-assumes its right.
Awak'd, the king, in wild surprise,
Prostrate in dust and ashes lies.
The monarch rous'd, himself abhorr'd,
And own'd his guilt before the Lord:
Now agonis'd in prayer he speaks,
"The multitude of mercies seeks."
His prayer, his penitence, obtain
A respite from the threaten'd pain.
Though God decreed he should not die,
Not perish everlastingly,
Yet justice sought not to prevent,
Though he delay'd, the punishment.
The dire effects of sin we see
In his degenerate family.
To him no future peace was known,
One son rebell'd against his throne;
Ungrateful friends, domestic jars,
Intestine tumults, foreign wars:
Contending brothers fiercely strive;
Dark enmity is kept alive:
Now murmurs loud, now famine great,
Now fierce convulsions shake the state:
Divided empire soon we see
Distract his near posterity.
Thus, though his pardon mercy seals,
Sin's temporal results he feels.
God with offence will have no part,
Ev'n in *the man of his own heart.*

All sadly serves to prove our fall
From purity original.

Taught by the wisdom from above,
See PROVERBS, full of truth and love.
To thee, O SOLOMON! belong
The graces of the mystic SONG.

ECCLESIASTES, or the PREACHER,
Displays the powerful moral teacher.
How could'st thou, sapient king, combine
Thy faulty life, and verse divine?
Why were thy PROVERBS still at strife
With thy dishonour'd close of life?
Thou rear'dst the Temple — oh, the sin
To quit the God who dwelt within!
Of all, O king, thy *books* have taught,
With holy wisdom richly fraught;
Still more thy large *experience* brings
The emptiness of human things.
In all thy keen and wide pursuit
Of love, power, pleasure, what's the fruit?
Satiety in all we see,
In each enjoyment vanity!
Youth might be spar'd a world of woe,
The truth without the trial know,
Would they with abler heads advise,
And trust king Solomon, the wise,
That the vex'd heart, and sated mind,
In God alone repose can find.

PART THE SECOND.

THE PROPHETS.

THEE, great ISAIAH, dare I paint,
Prophet, evangelist, and saint?
So just thy strong prospective view,
'Tis prophecy and history too.
Rapt in futurity, he saw,
The Gospel supersede the law.
Prophet! in thy immortal lines,
The fulness of perfection shines;
There, present things the spirit seals,
There, things that shall be, he reveals.
Doctrine and warning, prayer, and praise,
Alike our admiration raise.
Amaz'd, we see the hand divine
Each thought direct, inspire each line.
Still has the seraph's burning coal
Left its deep impress on the soul;
Still shall the sacred fire survive,
Warm all who read, touch all who live.
'Twere hopeless to attempt the song,
So vast, so deep, so sweet, so strong!
Fain would I tell how Sharon's rose,
In solitary deserts blows;
Fain would I speak of Carmel's hill,
Whose trees the barren waste shall fill;

Of Lebanon's transplanted shade,
To sandy vallies how convey'd;
The noblest metaphors we find
To loftiest objects there assign'd.
These splendid scenes before us bring
Th' invisible, redeeming King.
In every image, every line,
Messiah! we behold Thee shine.
But who shall dare these charms to tell,
One British * bard has sung so well?
His *Christian* page shall never die,
O si sic omnia! all reply.
Blest prophet! who a theme could'st find
Congenial to thy mighty mind!
Here we behold together brought
Splendour of diction, force of thought;
In these bold images we see
Grandeur without hyperbole.
Here all God's attributes unite;
The gracious and the infinite:
Beyond imagination's dream
Thy true, august, and holy theme.
All that the loftiest mind conceives,
All that the strongest faith believes,
All were too feeble to express
God's love, his pow'r, his holiness!
His length, and breadth, and depth, and height,
In all their wide extremes unite:
No danger of excess is here;
To sink too low is all thy fear.

* See Pope's exquisite poem of "The Messiah."

To His broad eye, all nations see
Are less than nought, are vanity.
To Him all Lebanon could bring
Only a worthless offering;
The waters, at His bidding, stand
Within the hollow of his hand;
The mountains in His scales are weigh'd,
The hills are in His balance laid;
Measur'd by His almighty hand,
The globe a particle of sand!
Though with tremendous arm he come,
With pow'r which strikes the nations dumb;
Centre and source of light and love,
In whom we are, and live, and move;
Though not confin'd to time or place,
Not to the vast extent of space;
Objects of his paternal care,
The meanest still his mercies share;
He who in highest heaven resides,
Yet in the contrite heart abides.
Now, shepherd-like, his flock he feeds,
The tender bears, the feeble leads;
Power to the weak, but trusting saints
He gives, and might to him that faints.
The young may fail, the strong be weak,
But all who His salvation seek,
Strong in the Lord, shall be renew'd;
With new-born vigour be endu'd;
On eagles' wings sublimely soar,
To fear, and faint, and sin no more. *

* Isaiah, chap. xl.

Hear JEREMIAH's plaintive song
Pour its full tide of grief along!
By predisposing grace ordain'd,
The prophet's function he sustain'd;
By his predicting voice reveal'd,
Thy doom, O Babylon, is seal'd!
On Judah 'twas his fate to see
Accomplish'd his own prophecy.
In what pathetic strains he show'd
Their miseries from their vices flow'd!
The *form* of goodness they defend,
But hate its *power*, and miss its *end*.
For lying vanities abhorr'd,
They plead "the Temple of the Lord;"
"The Temple of the Lord are these!"
Their varnish'd falsehoods more displease;
As if the edifice alone
Their practis'd evils could atone.
The Temple is beyond dispute,
A means, but not a substitute:
A fair profession may be found,
With lives unholy, hearts unsound.
Can fanes, though hallow'd, supersede
The lively faith, the virtuous deed?
Though by himself ordain'd, the Lord
The heartless sacrifice abhorr'd.
No reigning vice he left untold,
Expostulation sad, yet bold,
Lays bare the sins they sought to hide;
Vain boasting, arrogance, and pride:

Reproves alike both age and youth;
Neither is valiant for the truth.
Wisdom, or wealth, or pow'r, or might,
Alone, as rightly us'd, is right.
All glorying is by heav'n abhorr'd,
Save that which glories in the Lord.

Sublimely sad his woes impart
Their LAMENTATIONS to the heart.
Pity and woe his bosom share,
Anger and fondness, grief and prayer.
Fountains of tears could scarce express
His sorrows' and his love's excess.

EZEKIEL comes in awful state,
His vision mystically great!
The Prophet, see, his watch-tow'r keep,
The shepherd blame, console the sheep.

When Babylon's imperial lord
Crush'd Judah by his conqu'ring sword;
DANIEL, erect, of noble mind,
With three believing brothers join'd,
Captives among the Jews were brought,
And in the royal palace taught;
Chaldea's learning they acquir'd,
The king, the ingenuous youths admir'd;
At dainty tables gave them meat,
Himself ordain'd the plenteous treat.
The tempting cates he bade provide,
The daily bounties he supplied,

The wines, the royal vintage find,
Seduce not Daniel's guarded mind,
Tempt not the self-denying three;
All shun the snares of luxury.
"No food, but pulse, before us bring,
"No drink, but the translucent spring."
The king an image vast display'd,
Enormous was the statue made:
With impious zeal his laws ordain,
All should repair to Dura's plain:
Princes and counsellors appear,
Rulers of provinces be there!
At sound of sackbut psalt'ry, flute,
All must attend: who dares dispute
The high behest, who will not own
The idol's godhead, shall be thrown
Deep in the fiery caldron's blaze,
And burn in that capacious vase.
See Dura's plain how crowded now!
All make the prostituted vow;
All praise, all honour, all adore;
The zealous king can ask no more.
What, all? Is no exception found,
In idol worship *all* abound?
The holy brotherhood behold,
In God's almighty strength how bold!
Nor flute nor sackbut's sound controls
The firm, fix'd purpose of their souls.
Their eyes, their hearts are rais'd on high,
The burning caldron they defy.
Now hear the valiant brothers speak,
See them magnanimously meek;

No arts to soothe the haughty king,
No charge against his idol bring,
No doubts, no fears, no hesitation;
They wait no slow deliberation.
Prepar'd they stand. They scorn to swerve:
" Thy gods, O king, we will not serve;
" We serve Jehovah; his command
" Can save his servants from thy hand,
" E'en from the flames his children save,
" Snatch from the fearful fiery grave.
" If not, obedience is his due,
" In life, in death, resolv'd and true,
" No image shall our worship see,
" No idol, though set up by thee."
The king with madd'ning fury turns;
With seven-fold heat the caldron burns;
To such intensity it grew,
The men who cast them in it slew.
The ardent blaze unaw'd they dare,
They burn not! God's own Son is there!
Sav'd by an all-controlling hand,
Unhurt amidst the flames they stand.
Triumphant Lord! sav'd by thy power,
Nor floods shall drown, nor flames devour.
The awe-struck king the scene surveys;
Hear him the cry of rapture raise:
" They live! come forth! let my command
" Be strait proclaim'd throughout the land;
" Let Babylon's wide empire know
" God reigns above, and rules below.
" If any dare my law deny,
" Or Azariah's God defy,

" On dunghill heaps they shall be trod;
" No God delivers like this God."
Let youthful readers not despise
The hints which from this tale arise;
If base intemperance had possess'd
Its empire o'er the yielding breast;
Or did excess in wine obtain
A conquest o'er the youthful brain,
By these joint enemies subdu'd,
Where might have been their fortitude?
Who rules the appetite shall find
An easier task to rule the mind.
DANIEL, the statesman, saint, and sage,
Brav'd, yet unhurt, the lion's rage.
How fervently the Prophet spoke!
Warm from his lips the rapture broke:
Our righteousness we dare not plead,
For we have none in thought or deed:
Thy oracles neglected lie;
Abus'd thy dreadful majesty!
Our sins are great, yet greater still
Thy power to pardon, and thy will;
Oh, Lord, forgive! Oh, hear us, Lord!
For thy own sake thy help afford.
So prompt to prayer to grant thine aid,
'Tis heard almost before 'tis made.
Soon may it come, the day all hail!
When God's free Spirit shall prevail:
In full effusion, large and wide,
In ev'ry heart be multiplied.
What *must* arrive, if God be true,
Why wait for in a distant view?

Why not besiege at once the throne,
Till Heaven the supplication own?
Behold the rapid course of things!
Time hastes on ever-active wings:
The day is restless in its flight,
And swift, though silent, flies the night;
The fountains flow, the rivers run,
The sinner hastes to be undone.
Each follows fast the bent design'd,
Whether in matter or in mind;
The Christian only, duties known,
Dares not reject, but dares postpone.

HOSEA, in each indignant line,
Denounc'd on sin the wrath divine.

JOEL directs to fast and pray,
And God's displeasure turn away;
The threat'nings of the Lord he brings,
And then his goodness sweetly sings:
Why will ye perish? turn, O turn,
Before his indignation burn!
Bow down your hearts, his kindness prove;
Not merely loving, — God is love;
Quick to forgive, slow to resent:
Approach his footstool, and repent.
He will your contrite prayers receive,
Perhaps he may a blessing leave:
Corn, wine, and oil, again bestow,
Remove the plague, and heal the woe.

Amos exhorts, and warns, and strives
That Judah should reform their lives.
His powerful precepts never cease
To warn the rich who live at ease.
You that on downy couches lie,
Or stretch on beds of ivory;
You, who voluptuously consume
Your wealth, whose meal's a hecatomb;
Who, at a single feast exhaust
A vineyard of uncounted cost;
Whose perfumes, floating in the air,
A Sybarite might be proud to share;
Whose festive luxuries must be crown'd
With the soft lute and viol's sound;
Are *you* the men with grief who melt
At tales of woe by brethren felt?
Ask Amos: he this truth imparts,
That pleasure hardens human hearts;
That selfish feelings most abound
Where ease and luxury are found.
How strange the paradox, yet true,
That what dissolves should harden too!

Brief Obadiah, full of grace,
Says much, though in a little space.

Jonah! How high thy honours stand,
Who by one sermon rous'd a land!
At the last day how will thy fame,
Oh, Nineveh, my country shame!
Lull'd in deceitful peace, we see
Ten thousand sermons wake not thee!

Jonah! thy honours sunk how low
When wrath deform'd thy sullen brow!
Better a mighty empire fall,
Than Jonah's credit sink at all!
Oh, human selfishness how great,
To mourn a gourd and not a state!
The Prophet here the pastor teaches
To practise what so well he preaches.

MICAH, admir'd through ev'ry age,
The babe of Bethlehem crowns thy page!
With what precision dost thou trace
The then obsure, now honour'd place!

NAHUM, all hail thy muse of fire,
The glories of thy daring lyre!
"The still small voice" no more is heard,
As when of old the Lord appear'd.
The whirlwind, and the driving storm,
His fearful wonders now perform;
How terrible his thunders sound!
The awe-struck sinner how confound!
No horrors can the guilty move,
Like the fierce wrath of injur'd love.
Blest Prophet! had thy strains been heard
From the proud lyre of Theban bard,
How would the rapt enthusiast turn,
"To thoughts that breathe, and words that burn!"
But though not nurs'd on Pindus' mount,
Nor fed from Aganippe's fount;
Thou offerest, at a loftier shrine
Than Delphi own'd, thy ode divine.

Thy muse with nobler claims shall rise:
Her inspiration's from the skies;
This the chief glory of thy lays,
Thou hadst a *living* God to praise.

Though, HABAKKUK, thy name refuse
To bend obedient to the muse,
Yet thy sweet promises impart
Warm comfort to the drooping heart.
In thy fam'd prayer, sublimely sweet,
The saint and muse in concert meet.
God came from Teman; what array
Of confluent glories marks his way!
Brightness above, around was sent;
The pestilence before him went.
The skies with unknown splendours blaze,
Heaven shows his power, and earth his praise;
The everlasting mountains fled,
The rivers trembled in their bed;
Bow'd the perpetual hills; the deep
Through its dark caves was heard to sweep.
His arrows fly! Lord, at thy will
Th' astonish'd sun and moon stand still!
The shining of thy glitt'ring spear
Transfix'd the heathen bands with fear.
One glance of thy pervading eye
Measures the earth; the nations fly,
Dissolv'd and scatter'd; Cushan's tents
Burst forth in deep and loud laments.
They tremble at the distant sound,
Sudden thy troops their tents surround.

Yet though Chaldea's hostile band
Pour in their hordes, despoil the land;
Yet though the fig-tree may be found
With neither fruit nor blossom crown'd;
The olive and the vine decay,
And flocks and herds be torn away;
My song of praise my God shall hear,
More free, more fervent, more sincere.
"Revive thy work;" though all should fail,
Let grace and godliness prevail.
Lord of my strength; my joy, my crown,
Thy boundless mercies let me own!
Thy great salvation sets me free,
I shall have all in having Thee!

Thou, ZEPHANIAH, dost record,
Boldly, the terrors of the Lord!

HAGGAI the slothful Jews exhorts
To build the Temple's hallow'd courts:
They, while their splendid mansions shine,
Neglect JEHOVAH's sacred shrine.

Thy visions, ZECHARIAH, stand
As beacons to a guilty land;
Though awfully obscure, yet true,
They teach the Briton as the Jew.
Known to the Lord, the day will come,
Reversing Salem's awful doom!
Where nought was seen but waste and woe,
There shall the living waters flow;

Destruction's direful work be past,
And Christ the King be crown'd at last.
Her courts, by those who long have fought
Against her, eagerly be sought:
One Lord, one God, shall reign alone,
His name, long prophesied, be ONE.
On every vessel, every breast,
One grand inscription be imprest;
And HOLINESS TO GOD be found
Within, without, above, around!

Sage MALACHI, though last not least,
Prepares us for the Gospel feast.
Tremendous in the sinner's ear
Jehovah's menaces appear.
Those who the sacred function fill,
Profess my name but spurn my will.
When men no more my laws respect,
The worthless offering I reject.
From hands polluted and profane,
All sacrifice is worse than vain.
Methinks the scorner's voice I hear,
Where is the God of judgment, where?
Scorner! his coming is at hand;
That dreadful coming, who shall stand?
He, whom in unbelief you taunt,
The angel of the covenant;
Object of dread, and of desire,
Draws nigh; like the refiner's fire
The precious gold he will select,
The dross indignantly reject.

He will, with his omniscient eye,
By trial search, and purify.
Elijah comes, the morning star,
The great precursor seen from far;
The herald of repentance, he
Shall close the scheme of prophecy;
Fulfil the law, prepare the way,
The earnest of approaching day.
With healing beams the light divine,
The SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS shall shine.
Like fragrant incense shall arise
His intercession to the skies;
With this, the suppliant shall prevail,
Without it, prayer itself shall fail.

* * * * * * *

Yet e'er the ancient books you leave,
This truth in all your hearts receive, —
That all the saints unite with care
To prove the omnipotence of PRAYER.
Search through the annals of mankind,
One solitary instance find;
Prove that you know one prayer preferr'd
In faith by man, by God not heard;
Then boldly venture, if you dare,
No more to lift your heart in prayer.
Till then, pray on; 'twill clear your way:
Chiefly for God's own Spirit pray:
There we shall find, if there we seek,
Wealth for the poor, strength for the weak;

Soundness for sickness, life for death,
Derived from this inspiring breath;
Till every nation, tongue, and tribe,
The healing influence shall imbibe;
Distilling like the genial rain,
Or dews upon the tender grain:
This, in the secret of the soul,
Each strong temptation shall control;
And some faint image, lost before,
Of its bright origin restore.

PART THE THIRD.

THE GOSPELS.

THIS dispensation, clear and bright,
Brings immortality to light;
Proclaims the rebel Man restor'd,
Th' Apostate brought to know the Lord.
Within this consecrated ground
Discrepancies are never found;
The writers vary just to prove
That not in concert do they move;
While Jesus' glory stands reveal'd,
The Authors' faults are not conceal'd;
No selfish arts, no private ends,
But all to one grand centre tends;
No fact disguis'd, however wrong,
No truth kept back, however strong.
One sure criterion leaves no doubt,
Consistency prevails throughout:
The doctrine who shall dare disprove,
Of genuine faith which works by love?

MATTHEW and MARK divinely treat
Those truths which LUKE and JOHN repeat:
Though all concur in one grand scheme,
Each throws fresh light upon the theme.

MATTHEW by no vain hope enticed,
Left all he had to follow Christ;
Behold him faithfully record
The matchless Sermon of his Lord.
Here, every want its refuge seeks;
Here every grace its nature speaks;
Each in its own appropriate place,
The blessing suited to the case.
Each gift to its own want confin'd;
Mercy the merciful shall find.
How cheering to the poor in spirit,
Promis'd a kingdom to inherit!
Told e'en on earth, the meek man knows
The best enjoyments Heav'n bestows;
Lovers of peace shall peace possess,
Comfort the comfortless shall bless;
That he who feels the oppressor's rod
Feels more the mercies of his God;
Proclaims, the pure in heart shall see,
In God, Essential Purity.

MARK, next among the historic saints,
The Baptist of the desert paints.
Herod the prophet gladly heard,
In many things obey'd his word.
But mark the rapid race of sin!
They fast advance who once begin.
Long train'd in vice, the tempter now
Ensnares him to a sinful vow:
Her graceful movements win his heart,
He will with half his kingdom part:

Sudden he cries, by passion driven,
"Make thy demand — it shall be given."
Fearless she ask'd the Baptist's head,
The king was griev'd, the king obey'd:
O fruitless sorrow, vainly spent,
To mourn the crime he might prevent!
If sinful such a vow to make,
More sin to keep it than to break.
To death he doom'd the saint he lov'd;
Condemn'd the preacher he approv'd;
And she whose softness charm'd before,
Herself the bleeding victim bore.
What wonder if the king amaz'd,
Should dread in Christ that John was rais'd?

See LUKE the glorious scene record
The scene of his transfigur'd Lord!
This sight of wonder and of love
Confirms the glorious state above:
How blest the three * to whom 'twas given
To view three † witnesses from heaven!
The representatives they saw
Of Gospel, Prophecy, and Law.

Luke more Christ's miracles records,
JOHN more preserves his gracious words;
Records, for Christian consolation,
His Saviour's heavenly conversation.
Though John for ever stands approv'd
The blest disciple Jesus lov'd;
Yet all one path devoutly trod,
And follow'd their redeeming God.

* Peter, James, and John. † Jesus, Moses, and Elias.

In HIM the wondrous union view,
Atonement and *example* too!
His death sole means lost man to save;
His life our lives a pattern gave.
Explore the mystery as we can,
The perfect God was perfect man:
As man he felt affliction's rod,
As man he suffer'd, rose as God.
This union all his actions prove,
As God, as man, he show'd his love;
As man to man in every state
Something he left to imitate.
Divine Philanthropist! to Thee
We lift the heart and bow the knee,
As man, man's sympathies he felt;
In tears of tenderness could melt;
Weep, o'er the fated city's doom;
Weep, Lazarus, o'er thy honour'd tomb!
The hidden heart of man he knew;
Felt for his wants and weakness too.
The bruised reed he never broke,
His burden easy, light his yoke;
From heaven to earth his mercies reach,
Alike to save us, or to teach.
When call'd on error to reprove,
Reproof was kindness, censure love:
A cure his ready hand applies
For blindness, or of heart, or eyes.
Though with a look, a touch, a word,
The long-lost vision he restor'd;
A casual hint may pastors seize
For those who yet "see men as trees."

Jesus watch'd o'er th' imperfect sight,
And blest the blind with *gradual* light.
His saints no vain display relate,
No miracles for pomp or state;
No artful show for private ends,
But all to use and mercy tends.
His life a constant lecture reads
For minor as for greater deeds;
Not that *his* hunger might be fed,
He multiplies the scanty bread:
The famish'd troops in order plac'd,
He ne'er forgot to bless the feast:
Though endless stores he could produce,
He sav'd the fragments for their use.
We pass each suffering, glorious scene,
The manger and the cross between;
All "he began to do and teach"
We pass, till calvary we reach.
The attempt almost too bold we deem,
And trembling touch the awful theme.
All eloquence, all power of speech,
Imagination's loftiest reach,
Fall short, and could but faintly prove
Th' incarnate God's last scene of love.
Abandon'd, none his woes partake;
One friend denies him, all forsake.
Yet though the sacred blood was shed,
"Captivity was captive led."
The annals of mankind explore,
Did ever conqueror before
Make palpable to human eyes,
Achieve such glorious victories?

Besides the triumphs of his grace
Which only *faith*'s purg'd eye can trace;
Marvels applied to sight and sense,
Exhibit his omnipotence.
Shrouded Divinity confest,
What prodigies the Lord attest!
Things contrary, opposing creatures
Struck at the sight, forget their natures;
The human voice is mute; the dumb
And senseless eloquent become.
Things breathless, things inanimate
Renounce, nay, contradict their fate.
Things never meant to sympathise
Astonish unbelieving eyes.
The firm earth trembled at the view;
Th' indignant sun his light withdrew;
No natural cause eclips'd his face,
He would not witness man's disgrace.
Asunder torn, the rocks proclaim
Their sympathies with loud acclaim.
The yawning sepulchres unclose;
To life their sleeping tenants rose;
The Temple's vail is seen to rend,
And with it all distinctions end!
All various nature takes a part,
All, save the obdurate human heart.
The soldier, and th' expiring thief
Alone, proclaim their firm belief.
Lord, "IT IS FINISHED:" here we meet,
Promise and prophecy complete.
Shall death the Lord of life detain?
No! he but dies to rise again.

Then come the APOSTLES' wondrous facts,
Their travels, miracles, and ACTS.
The Holy Spirit from above,
Given as the Messenger of Love.
The various languages once sent,
To Babel as its punishment,
Here take a diff'rent nature quite,
Not meant to scatter, but unite;
That every nation here below
In its own tongue God's word might know.
Ye, who to idols long confin'd,
Are blind in heart, and dark in mind;
Half quench'd the intellectual ray,
While WE withheld the moral day;
To the strong hold, ye prisoners, turn,
Prisoners of hope! no longer mourn.
See Christ extended empire gains,
See mountains sinking into plains!
The Builders on the CORNER-STONE,
Cease not like Babel's — they work *on*,
Till Saba and Arabia bring
Due tribute to th' Eternal King;
The living WORD shall life impart,
Unseal the eye, and change the heart;
Till Jew and Gentile, bond and free,
Greek and Barbarian, truth shall see.
Not by man's might, nor deed, nor word,
But by the Spirit of the Lord.
Hear martyr'd Stephen, as he dies,
Pray for his murd'rous enemies!
Then bring from Greek or Roman story
So pure an instance of true glory!

And *is* the furious bigot Saul
Become, indeed, the humble Paul?
Strange pow'r of all transforming grace,
The lamb assumes the lion's place!
So blind, when persecution's rod
He held, he thought 'twas serving God:
But now so meek himself he paints,
"Less than the least of all the saints!"
Stephen! thy prayer in death, preferr'd
To save thy enemies, is heard;
And Paul, perhaps, the earliest fruit
Of the first martyr's dying suit.
Forgive the Muse if she recall
So oft to mind the sainted Paul.
We pass the awful truths he tells;
His labours, woes, and miracles;
We pass the pow'rs his cause who heard;
How Felix trembled, Festus fear'd;
Pass, how the Jewish king receiv'd
The truth, half doubted, half believ'd;
We pass the different works of grace
In Lydia and the gaoler's case;
We pass the perils Paul endur'd
From stripes; in prisons how immur'd;
In nakedness and hunger groan'd;
Betray'd, thrice beaten, shipwreck'd, ston'd!
In every varying state, we see
Only a change in misery.
How oft has admiration hung
On the great lyric bard, who sung
The warrior fam'd in Punic story,
Who swell'd the tide of Roman glory!

With magnanimity heroic,
He dignifies the noble stoic.
See the illustrious captive stand,
Resolv'd, unshaken, on the strand;
Imploring friends around him weep;
All mourn the hero all would keep.
E'en the stern senators in vain
The patriot would at last detain.
No blessings of domestic life,
Nor darling child, nor tender wife,
He heeds; repels his wife's embrace,
Th' endearments of his infant race.
No sigh he heaves, he drops no tear,
Nought but his oath and country dear.
He knows the tortures which await,
Knows all the horrors of his fate:
By death in direst shapes unmov'd,
He coolly quitted all he lov'd.
Compos'd, as if, hard law-suits past,
He sought a calm retreat at last;
Such calm as crowns Venafrian fields,
Such charms as cool Tarentum yields.
The great Apostle now behold,
A hero cast in Christian mould;
Though learn'd, he will not take his rule
From doctors of the Stoic school.
Religion stops not nature's course,
But turns to other streams its force.
Forewarn'd, he knew where'er he went
'Twas prison, death, or banishment.
'Twas not a vague, uncertain fear;
God's Spirit show'd him what was near,

Show'd him the woes which must befall,
Not in one country, but in all.
  Behold him now encircled stand,
Like the brave Roman on the strand:
A lovelier scene * adorns no page
Than that which now our thoughts engage.
Weeping, his Christian friends surround;
Their tender anguish knows no bound;
Their tears to him their grief impart,
"Mean you to weep and break my heart?"
  Hear him with modest grace record
His toils for his forgiving Lord:
Pour out the tender love he feels,
Then to their justice he appeals.
Still to your highest interests true,
Witness, I sought not yours, but you.
This heart, for you my daily care,
Is lifted up in ceaseless prayer;
These hands have oft procur'd my bread,
And labour'd that the poor be fed.
O treasure close in every breast,
Your Saviour's posthumous bequest,
If 'tis a blessing to receive,
Far more a blessing 'tis to give;
Then warns to feed the church of God,
Purchas'd by His redeeming blood.
  Thrice bless'd the pastor who, like Paul,
The past with comfort can recall;
His life and doctrine both review
To auditors who feel both true:

* Acts, chap. xx.

Fears not his conduct to declare
Holy, unblameable, sincere.
His preaching catholic; he speaks
Impartially to Jews and Greeks.
No words of doubtful disputation
Allure from his grand end — salvation;
FAITH and REPENTANCE form his theme,
Compendium of the Christian scheme!
No searching truth he e'er conceal'd,
But God's whole counsel still reveal'd.
He speaks: — "The woes which must befall,
"My trusting soul shall ne'er appal.
"If I for God my span employ;
"If He my course may crown with joy;
"If I may spend my painful race,
"To testify redeeming grace;
"No dread of death my soul shall move,
"Secure in Him I serve and love."
His friends, lamenting, crowd the shore,
They part, they see his face no more:
Their sorrows and his own to cheer,
He consecrates the scene with prayer.

PART THE FOURTH.

THE EPISTLES.

NEXT come the ROMANS; here we trace
The flagrant manners of their race.
Though Nero then Rome's sceptre sway'd,
Yet conscientious Paul obey'd;
Fearless he taught that all should bring
Allegiance to their rightful king.
In this Epistle we may find
The depths and heights of his great mind:
Here rhetoric and logic meet
The cause of faith to vindicate.

Paul, when the rich CORINTHIANS came,
Found much to praise and much to blame:
Luxurious, negligent and proud;
No error was by him allow'd.
As Christian truth should still be told,
The righteous Paul is meekly bold;
And yet such tenderness appears,
His very frowns are mixed with tears!
One glorious truth he here defends,
That truth on which *all* truth depends;
Labours one doctrine to mantain,
Which if not true, he preach'd in vain;
Vain, too, their faith, which dared not trust
The resurrection of the just.

If they no *risen* Christ received,
In vain he taught, and they believed.
Then, mounting above space or time,
He soars with energy sublime;
Exhausts on this grand contemplation
High argument, bold illustration!
Created nature see he brings,
Attesting to the truth he sings:
All grain, all flesh, their tribute lend;
The diff'ring stars the truth defend:
If these proclaim God's glory true,
When the material heavens we view,
His glory sun and moon declare,
When on this doctrine brought to bear.
In vain shall death his prey devour,
'Twas sown in weakness, rais'd in power!
Nor slow the process: Heaven is nigh;
Quick, in the twinkling of an eye,
Methinks I see the mould'ring clay
Start into life, wake into day!
Dread sound! 'tis the last trumpet's voice!
Reviv'd, transported, all rejoice.
Hark! heard I not that rapturous cry,
Death swallow'd up in victory?
Jesus — the ransom'd join to sing,
Jesus, oh, Death! extracts thy sting.
Can Paul, absorb'd in scenes so bright,
Again on earth vouchsafe to light?
To drop, from his exhaustless store,
One parting, pointed moral more?
One added precept deign to press?
He can — "Awake to righteousness!

" In God's great work still more abound,
" Nor shall your labours vain be found."

The bold GALATIANS Paul reproves,
And much he blames, though much he loves;
Condemns the teachers whom he saw
Exchange the Gospel for the law.
To clear his doctrine from suspicion,
He vindicates his heavenly mission.

Th' EPHESIANS stand in glory bright,
On whom Paul shed the Gospel-light:
Where great Diana was ador'd,
They follow'd on to know the Lord!
This matchless letter you will find
A perfect model of its kind.

Where Anthony with Brutus fought,
There Christian Paul a refuge sought.
Yet e'en PHILIPPIANS could be found
The Saviour in his saint to wound:
A prison the reward bestowed
On him to whom their souls they owed.
Did Paul the cruelty resent,
Or in reproach his anger vent?
No; — if the saint *exceeds* in love,
Invokes *more* favours from above;
If e'er his full o'erflowing heart
Sought *warmer* blessings to impart;
If *more* for any friends he pray'd,
For showers of mercies on their head;
It was for this distinguish'd place,
The scene of his most foul disgrace!

How does his fervent spirit burn
Their recent kindness to return!
What terms, what arguments employ,
To fill their hearts with holy joy!
What consolation from above;
What comfort from eternal love!
From God's blest Spirit drawing nigh;
Communion sweet, communion high!
Such strong persuasion must control,
Convince the reason, melt the soul!
He urges motives as a law,
Which some would think deter, not draw.
"Take as a *gift* reserv'd for you,
"Power to believe, and *suffer* too!"

The good COLOSSIANS now stand forth,
Excell'd by none in grace and worth.
Behold the saint his touchstone give
To try with Christ if Christians live.
Oh, let your aspirations rise,
Nor stop at aught beneath the skies.
Your fruitless cares no more bestow
On perishable things below.
From sordid joys indignant fly;
Know, avarice is idolatry.
False worship's not confin'd alone
To images of wood and stone;
Whate'er you grasp with eager hold,
Honours or pleasures, fame or gold;
These are your idols, these you'll find
Possess your soul, engross your mind.
Heaven will with idols have no part:
That robs your God which steals your heart.

The THESSALONIANS next appear,
The bountiful and the sincere.
Here precept pure, and doctrine sound,
In sweet accordance may be found.
Mark the triumphant Christian's voice,
" Rejoice, *again* I say, rejoice!"
As he would echo back to heaven,
The holy transport grace had given.

Young TIMOTHY is on record,
Who sought betimes to know the Lord.
Here true maternal love we find,
Which form'd the heart, and taught the mind
Here may the British mother learn,
Her child's best interests to discern;
Her faithfulness to God best prove,
And best evince her Christian love.
Paul, while his pupil's good he seeks,
Through him to unborn pastors speaks;
" Reprove, exhort, be earnest still
" Your high commission to fulfil;
" Watch, labour, pray; in these consist
" The works of an Evangelist."
As Bishop, he commaads again,
" Commit the trust to faithful men;"
Bids him observe, that those who preach
Need to *remind* as well as *teach*.
To raise his soul to solemn thought,
God's Judgment is before him brought;
When seated in tremendous state,
The blest and only Potentate,
The members of the living head
Shall meet the Judge of quick and dead,

Then Christ his faithful sons shall own;
Who bore his Cross, shall wear his Crown.

Next TITUS, youthful yet discreet,
First Bishop of the Isle of Crete.
Here prudent Paul, divines to show
They ought their people's faults to know,
Quotes their own poet, to declare
The Cretans sensual, insincere.
Such knowledge teaches to reprove
The erring, and the just to love.
Now in the gentle tone of friend
See him to private life descend;
The sober duties to impart,
Which grace the life, and mend the heart.
He shows upon what hallow'd ground
Domestic happiness is found;
Warns the fair convert not to roam:
The truest joys are found at home;
'Tis there the chaste obedient mind
Will life's best charm confer, and find.

Follows PHILEMON, who forgave,
Yea, honour'd, his converted slave.

Paul to the HEBREWS writes: — O, then,
What inspiration guides his pen!
Let wits revile, let Atheists rail,
Such evidence shall never fail,
As the first pages here supply
Of Christ's unclouded Deity.

As he proceeds, to faith 'tis given
To soar on loftier wing to heaven.
See here the doctrine prov'd by facts,
Belief exhibited in acts.
See conquering Faith's heroic band
Church-militant in order stand!
The Red-Sea passengers we view,
Jephtha and Gideon, Barak too.
Had we all time, the time would fail
Of heroes to record the tale,
Whose deeds their attestation bring
That faith is no ideal thing.
Say, could ideal faith aspire
To quench the violence of fire?
To stop the famish'd lion's rage?
With dread temptations to engage?
All deaths despise, all dangers dare?
With no support, save God and prayer?
" 'Tis pride," the sneering Sceptic cries,
" Rank pride, the martyr's strength supplies:
" His fortitude by praise is fed,
" Praise is religion's daily bread.
" The public show, the attendant crowd,
" The admiration fond and loud;
" The gaze, the noise, his soul sustains,
" Applause the opiate of his pains;
" Withdraw the charm spectators bring,
" And torture is no joyous thing."
Thy triumphs, Faith, we need not take
Alone from the blest martyr's stake;
In scenes obscure, no less we see
That faith is a reality.

An evidence of things not seen,
A substance firm whereon to lean.
Go search the cottager's lone room,
The day scarce piercing thro' the gloom;
The Christian on his dying bed,
Unknown, unletter'd, hardly fed;
No flatt'ring witnesses attend,
To tell how glorious was his end;
Save in the book of life, his name
Unheard, he never dreamt of fame.
No human consolation near,
No voice to soothe, no friend to cheer.
Of every earthly stay bereft,
And nothing — but his SAVIOUR left.
Fast sinking to his kindred dust,
The Word of Life is still his trust.
The joy God's promises impart
Lies like a cordial at his heart;
Unshaken faith its strength supplies,
He loves, believes, adores, and dies!

The great Apostle ceases; — then
To holy JAMES resigns the pen:
James, full of faith and love, no doubt,
The practical and the devout.
Ye rich, the saint indignant cried,
Curs'd are all riches misapplied!
Abhorr'd the wealth which useless lies,
When merit claims, or hunger cries!
The wise alike with scorn behold
The hoarded as the squander'd gold.
In man opposing passions meet
The liberal feelings to defeat:

PLEASURE and AVARICE both agree
To stop the tide of charity:
Though each detests the other's deeds,
The same effect from both proceeds:
Curs'd is the gold, or sav'd, or spent,
Which God for mercy's portion meant:
Chemists in transmutation bold
Attempt to make base metals gold.
Let Christians then transmute their pelf
To something nobler than itself;
On heaven their rescued wealth bestow,
And send it home before they go:
HE will the blest deposit own:
Who seals the pardon, gives the crown.

PETER the bold, who perils hail'd,
Who promis'd much, and much he fail'd;
Peter the generous, rash, and warm,
Who lov'd his Lord, but shrunk from harm;
Peter the coward and the brave,
Denying Him he wish'd to save;
O Peter, what reproachful word,
What dagger keen, what two-edged sword,
Could pierce thy bosom like the last,
Last look thy Saviour on thee cast?
That speechless eloquence divine,
No pen, no pencil can define.
Peter, how bitter were thy tears!
Remorse absorb'd thy guilty fears.
Still, Peter, did thy risen Lord,
Conqueror of death, his grace afford;
Not to the men of faith approved,
Not to the saint whom Jesus loved,

It was to heal *thy* broken heart,
Comfort to anguish to impart:
Yes — 'twas to Peter that by name
Alone the glorious tidings came.
Now mark the wond'rous power of grace:
His character has changed its face;
The noblest attitude assumes:
Who now on his own strength presumes?
Where now his fears? we only see
True Christian magnanimity.
Who now the foremost to declare
His grand commission? who to dare
The standard of the Cross to raise,
And his ador'd Redeemer praise?
Applause he scorn'd, however true,
But gave the glory where 'twas due.
With what majestic grace he rose,
Fearless of all surrounding foes;
Brought the old Scriptures to apply
His argument from prophecy:
From miracles which well accord,
He prov'd that Jesus was the Lord.
When requisite in some hard case
To check deceit, unmask the base,
'Twas Peter's office: see him dare
Seize the prevaricating pair.*
One question stops the fraudful breath,
And blasts them both with instant death.
Ask you what truth he lov'd to teach,
What theme he hasten'd first to preach?

* Ananias and Sapphira.

REPENTANCE! — What he felt he taught:
A mighty change his preaching wrought?
The fruits were equal to the zeal;
They best can teach who deepest feel.
Crown'd were his labours: Peter died
A martyr to the CRUCIFIED.

With love his pure EPISTLES fraught,
JOHN teaches what his Gospel taught:
He needs no argument to prove,
Save his own heart, that God is love.

JUDE, what his letter wants in length,
Redeems by energy and strength.
Confirms the truth from revelation
Of Enoch's marvellous translation.
Hear him in awful terms declare,
The mis'ries which the ungodly share!
Clouds without water, dark yet dry,
Spots in the feasts of charity;
Trees withering, destitute of fruit,
Exterminated branch and root.
Now in its pomp and dread array,
He summons to the judgment-day.
O, what conflicting trains of thought
Has this amazing image brought!
O, what a fire this spark has kindled,
Of terror and of transport mingled,
Spirits who lost their first estate
Retaining their immortal hate!
The bold impenitent shall hear
His doom: his sentence blank despair:

The hypocrite detected lie,
Naked, laid bare to every eye.
To crown the horrors which await,
All feel the justice of their fate.
Their fears their punishment foretell,
And conscience does the work of hell.
They as the acmé of their pain,
Acquit their Judge, themselves arraign.
No shelter now from rocks or caves,
No refuge from the fiery waves;
What wonder, wildly if they call
The mountains on their heads to fall.
Then see the Man of Sorrows found,
The Lord of life and glory crown'd.
Jesus appears, as Enoch paints,
Surrounded by ten thousand saints.
Lo! heaven and earth their tribute bring
Of glory to the eternal king!
Angels, archangels, each degree
Of heaven's celestial hierarchy!
The noble martyrs' valiant band
Before their conqu'ring Captain stand:
The goodly prophets here behold
Fulfill'd the scenes they once foretold:
Their Lord encircling, here we see
The Apostles' glorious company.
Heaven kindly veils from human sight
All that great day will bring to light.
Extremes of bliss, extremes of woe,
This dread tribunal shall bestow,
The crown of faith, the consummation
Of deathless, hopeless desperation.

THE REVELATION.

THE saint of Patmos last we meet,
And REVELATION stands complete.
In this bright vision, though he brings
Scenes of unutterable things,
He tempers heaven's effulgent light,
Too powerful else for mortal sight.
Partly by negatives are shown
Joys which hereafter shall be known:
Suffering, and sin, and death are o'er,
For former things are seen no more;
No sorrow felt, and heav'd no sigh,
And tears are wip'd from every eye.
Yet not by negatives alone,
Consummate glory shall be known:
Not only shall be found no night,
The LAMB himself shall be the light.
Sun, moon, and stars shall fade away,
Lost in one cloudless, endless day,
In heaven, as *being* knows no end,
Joy with duration shall extend;
There we shall know as we are known,
Desire and knowledge shall be one;
No tedious course, no process slow;
By intuition we shall know
The plan of Providence concealed
So long, in mercy, now revealed,

Shall burst upon th' enraptur'd sight,
And prove that what was dark was right.
If grief could touch the soul at rest,
And for one moment reach the blest,
'Twould be, that when on earth they found
A clouded dispensation frown'd,
Their faith presumptuous, weak and vain,
One doubt had dared to entertain.
Now faith is swallowed up in sight,
Hope in fruition infinite;
Immortal charity alone
Beams round the everlasting throne.
Redemption finished, sin forgiven,
'Tis God's own presence makes it heaven.
Of future bliss, if such the sum,
Then come, LORD JESUS, quickly come!

THE

SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS:

A PASTORAL DRAMA FOR YOUNG LADIES.

—— To rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot,
To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,
To breathe th' enliv'ning spirit, and to fix
The gen'rous purpose in the female breast. — THOMSON.

TO

MRS. GWATKIN.

DEAR MADAM,

As the following Poem turns chiefly on the danger of Delay or Error in the important article of Education, I know not to whom I can, with more propriety, dedicate it than to you, as the subject it inculcates has been one of the principal objects of your attention in your own family.

Let not the name of Dedication alarm you; I am not going to offend you by making your Eulogium: Panegyric is only necessary to suspicious characters: Virtue will not accept it; Delicacy will not offer it.

The friendship with which you have honoured me from my childhood, will, I flatter myself, induce you to pardon me for venturing to lay before you this public testimony of my esteem, and to assure you how much I am,

DEAR MADAM,

Your obedient

and obliged humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE object of the following Poem, which was written in very early youth, was an earnest wish to furnish a substitute for the very improper custom, which then prevailed, of allowing plays, and those not always of the purest kind, to be acted by young Ladies in boarding schools. And it has afforded a serious satisfaction to the Author to learn that this little Poem, and the preceding Sacred Dramas, have very frequently been adopted to supply the place of those more dangerous amusements. If it may be still happily instrumental in promoting a regard to Religion and Virtue in the minds of young persons, and afford them an innocent, and perhaps not altogether unuseful, amusement in the exercise of recitation, the end for which it was originally composed, and the Author's utmost wish in its republication, will be fully answered.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY A YOUNG LADY.

In these grave scenes, and unembellish'd strains,
Where neither sly intrigue nor passion reigns;
How dare we hope an audience will approve
A Drama void of wit and free from love?
Where no soft Juliet sighs, and weeps, and starts,
No fierce Roxana takes by storm your hearts;
No comic ridicule, no tragic swagger,
Not one elopement, not one bowl or dagger!
No husband wrong'd who trusted and believ'd,
No father cheated, and no friend deceiv'd;
No libertine in glowing strains describ'd,
No lying chambermaid that rake had brib'd:
Nor give we, to reward the rover's life,
The ample portion and the beauteous wife:
Behold, to raise the manners of the age,
The frequent moral of the scenic page!
And shall we then transplant these noxious scenes
To private life? to misses in their teens?
The pompous tone, the masculine attire,
The stilts, the buskin, the dramatic fire,
Corrupt the softness of the gentler kind,
And taint the sweetness of the youthful mind.
Ungovern'd passions, jealousy, and rage,
But ill become our sex, still less our age;

Whether we learn *too well* what we describe,
Or *fail* the Poet's meaning to imbibe;
In either case your blame we justly raise,
In either lose, or ought to lose, your praise.
How dull, if tamely flows the impassion'd strain!
If well — how bad to be the thing we feign!
To fix the mimic scene upon the heart,
And keep the passion when we quit the part!
Such are the perils the dramatic muse,
In youthful bosoms, threatens to infuse!
Our timid Author labours to impart
A less pernicious lesson to the heart;
What though no charm of melody divine
Smooth her round period, or adorn her line;
Though her unpolish'd page in vain aspires
To emulate the graces she admires;
Though destitute of skill, her sole pretence
But aims at simple truth and common sense:
Yet shall her honest unassuming page
Tell that its Author, in a modish age,
Preferr'd plain virtue to the boast of art,
Nor fix'd one dang'rous maxim on the heart.
O if, to crown her efforts, she could find
They rooted but one error from one mind;
If in the bosom of ingenuous youth
They stampt one useful thought, one lasting truth,
'Twould be a fairer tribute to her name
Than loud applauses, or an empty fame.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

EUPHELIA,
CLEORA,
PASTORELLA,
LAURINDA,
} Four young Ladies of distinction, in Search of Happiness.

URANIA, an ancient Shepherdess.

SYLVIA,
ELIZA,
} Her Daughters.

FLORELLA, a young Shepherdess.

THE SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS.

SCENE — *A grove.*

EUPHELIA, CLEORA, PASTORELLA, LAURINDA.

Cle. WELCOME, ye humble vales, ye flow'ry shades,
Ye crystal fountains, and ye silent glades!
From the gay mis'ry of the thoughtless great,
The walks of folly, the disease of state;
From scenes where daring Guilt triumphant reigns,
Its darks suspicions and its hoard of pains;
Where Pleasure never comes without alloy,
And Art but thinly paints fallacious joy;
Where Languor loads the day, Excess the night,
And dull Satiety succeeds Delight;
Where midnight Vices their fell orgies keep,
And guilty Revels scare the phantom Sleep;
Where dissipation wears the name of Bliss:
From these we fly in search of Happiness.

Eup. Not the tir'd Pilgrim, all his dangers past,
When he descries the long-sought shrine at last,
E'er felt a joy so pure as this fair field,
These peaceful shades, and smiling vallies yield:
For, sure, these oaks, which old as Time appear,
Proclaim Urania's lonely dwelling near.

Pas. How the description with the scene agrees!
Here lowly thickets, there aspiring trees;

The hazel copse excluding noonday's beam,
The tufted arbour, the pellucid stream;
The blooming sweet-briar and the hawthorn shade,
The springing cowslips, and the daisied mead;
The wild luxuriance of the full-blown fields,
Which Spring prepares, and laughing Summer yields!

Eup. Here simple Nature strikes th' enraptured eye
With charms, which wealth and art but ill supply;
The genuine graces which *without* we find,
Display the beauty of the owner's *mind.*

Lau. These deep embow'ring shades conceal the cell
Where sage Urania and her daughters dwell:
Florella too, if right we've heard the tale,
With them resides — the lily of the vale.

Cle. But soft! what gentle female form appears,
Which smiles of more than mortal beauty wears?
Is it the Guardian Genius of the grove?
Or some fair angel from the choirs above?

Enter FLORELLA, *who speaks.*

Whom do I see? ye beauteous virgins, say,
What chance conducts your steps this lonely way?
Do you pursue some fav'rite lambkin stray'd?
Or do yon alders court you to their shade?
Declare, fair strangers; if aright I deem,
No rustic nymphs of vulgar rank you seem.

Cle. No cooling shades allure our eager sight,
Nor lambkins lost, our searching steps invite.

Flo. Or is it, haply, yonder branching vine,
Whose tendrils round our low-roof'd cottage twine;

Whose spreading height, with purple clusters crown'd,
Attracts the gaze of ev'ry nymph around?
Have these lone regions aught that charms beside?
Yours are my shades, my flow'rs, my fleecy pride.

Eup. Florella! our united thanks receive;
Sole proof of gratitude we have to give:
And since you deign to ask, O courteous fair!
The motive of our unremitting care:
Know then, kind maid, our joint researches tend
To find that sovereign good of life, a friend;
From whom the wholesome counsel we may gain,
How our young hearts may happiness obtain.
By fancy's mimic pencil oft portray'd,
Still have we woo'd the visionary maid:
The lovely phantom mocks our eager eyes;
And still we chase, and still we miss the prize.

Cle. Long have we searched thoughout this bounteous isle,
With constant ardour and with ceaseless toil;
The various ways of various life we've tried;
But still the bliss we seek has been denied.
We've sought in vain through ev'ry diff'rent state;
The murm'ring poor, the discontented great.
If Peace and Joy in palaces reside,
Or in obscurer haunts delight to hide;
If Happiness with worldly pleasures dwell,
Or shrouds her graces in the hermit's cell:
If Wit, if Science, teach the road to bliss,
Or torpid dulness find the joys *they* miss;
To learn this truth, we've bid a long adieu
To all the shadows blinded men pursue.

— We seek Urania; whose sagacious mind
May lead our steps this latent good to find:
Her worth we emulate; her virtues fire
Our ardent hearts to *be* what we admire:
For though with care she shuns the public eye,
Yet worth like *hers* unknown can never lie.

Lau. On such a fair and faultless model form'd,
By Prudence guided, and by Virtue warm'd,
Perhaps Florella can direct our youth,
And point our footsteps to the paths of Truth.

Flo. Ill would it suit my unexperienc'd age
In such important questions to engage.
Young as I am, unskilful to discern,
Nor fit to teach, who yet have much to learn.
But would you with maturer years advise,
And reap the counsel of the truly wise,
The dame, in whom such worth and wisdom meet,
Dwells in the covert of yon green retreat:
All that the world calls great she once possess'd,
With wealth, with rank, her prosp'rous youth was bless'd.
In adverse fortune, now, serene and gay,
"Who gave," she said, "had right to take away."
Two lovely daughters bless her growing years,
And by their virtues well repay her cares.
With them beneath her shelt'ring wing I live,
And share the bounties she has still to give;
For Heav'n, who in its dispensations join'd
A narrow fortune to a noble mind,
Has bless'd the sage Urania with a heart
Which Wisdom's noblest treasures can impart;

In Duty's active round each day is past
As if she thought each day might prove her last:
Her labours for devotion best prepare,
And meek Devotion smooths the brow of Care.

Pas. Then lead, Florella, to that humble shed
Where Peace resides: from courts and cities fled!

SONG.

I.

O Happiness, celestial fair,
Our earliest hope, our latest care,
O hear our fond request;
Vouchsafe, reluctant Nymph, to tell
On what sweet spot thou lov'st to dwell,
And make us truly blest.

II.

Amidst the walks of public life,
The toils of wealth, ambition's strife,
We long have sought in vain;
The crowded city's noisy din,
And all the busy haunts of men,
Afford but care and pain.

III.

Pleas'd with the soft, the soothing pow'r
Of calm Reflection's silent hour,
Sequester'd dost thou dwell?
Where care and tumult ne'er intrude,
Dost thou reside with Solitude,
Thy humble vot'ries tell?

IV.

O Happiness, celestial fair,
Our earliest hope, our latest care,

Let us not sue in vain:
O deign to hear our fond request!
Come, take possession of our breast,
And there for ever reign.

[*They retire.*

SCENE — *The Grove.*

URANIA, SYLVIA, ELIZA.

SYLVIA (*singing*).

I.

Sweet Solitude, thou placid queen
Of modest air, and brow serene;
'Tis thou inspir'st the Sage's themes,
The poet's visionary dreams.

II.

Parent of Virtue, nurse of Thought,
By thee were saints and Patriarchs taught;
Wisdom from thee her treasures drew,
And in thy lap fair Science grew.

III.

Whate'er exalts, refines, and charms,
Invites to thought, to virtue warms;
Whate'er is perfect, fair, and good,
We owe to thee, sweet Solitude.

IV.

In these blest shades, O still maintain
Thy peaceful, unmolested reign!
Let no disorder'd thoughts intrude
On thy repose, sweet Solitude.

V.

With thee the charm of life shall last,
Although its rosy bloom be past;
Shall still endure when Time shall spread
His silver blossoms o'er my head.

VI.

No more with this vain world perplex'd,
Thou shalt prepare me for the next;
The springs of life shall gently cease,
And angels point the way to peace.

Ura. Ye tender objects of maternal love,
Ye dearest joys my widow'd heart can prove,
Come, taste the glories of the new-born day,
And grateful homage to its Author pay.
O, ever may this animating sight
Convey instruction while it sheds delight!
Does not that sun, whose cheering beams impart
Joy's glad emotions to the pure in heart;
Does not that vivid pow'r teach ev'ry mind
To be as warm, benevolent, and kind;
To burn with unremitted ardour still,
Like him to execute their Maker's will?
Then let us, Pow'r Supreme! thy will adore,
Invoke thy mercies, and proclaim thy pow'r.
Shalt thou these benefits in vain bestow?
Shall we forget the fountain whence they flow?
Teach us through these to lift our hearts to Thee,
And in the gift the bounteous Giver see.
To view Thee as thou art, all good and wise,
Nor let thy blessings hide Thee from our eyes.

From all obstructions clear our mental sight;
Pour on our souls thy beatific light.
Teach us thy wondrous goodness to revere,
With love to worship, and with rev'rence fear:
In the mild works of thy benignant hand,
As in the thunder of thy dread command.
In common objects we neglect thy pow'r,
While wonders shine in ev'ry plant and flow'r.
— Tell me, my first, my last, my darling care,
If you this morn have rais'd your hearts in pray'r?
Say, did you rise from the sweet bed of rest,
Your God unprais'd, his holy name unblest?

Syl. Our hearts with gratitude and rev'rence fraught,
By those pure precepts you have ever taught;
By your example more than precept strong,
Of pray'r and praise have tun'd their matin song.

El. With ever new delight, we now attend
The counsels of our fond maternal friend.

Enter FLORELLA, *with* EUPHELIA, CLEORA, PASTORELLA, LAURINDA.

Flo. [*aside to the Ladies.*] See how the goodly dame, with pious art,
Makes each event a lesson to the heart.
Observe the duteous list'ners how they stand:
Improvement and delight go hand in hand.

Ura. But where's Florella?

Flo. Here's the happy she,
Whom Heaven most favour'd when it gave her thee.

Ura. But who are these in whose attractive mien,
So sweetly blended, ev'ry grace is seen?

Speak, my Florella! say the cause why here
These beauteous damsels on our plains appear?
Flo. Invited hither by Urania's fame,
To seek her friendship, to these shades they came.
Straying alone at morning's earliest dawn,
I met them wand'ring on the distant lawn.
Their courteous manners soon engag'd my love:
I've brought them here your sage advice to prove.
Ura. Tell me, ye gentle nymphs, the reason tell,
Which brings such guests to grace my lowly cell?
My pow'r of serving, though indeed but small,
Such as it is, you may command it all.
Cle. Your counsel, your advice, is all we ask;
And for Urania that's no irksome task.
'Tis Happiness we seek: O deign to tell
Where the coy fugitive delights to dwell!
Ura. Ah, rather say where you have sought this guest,
This lovely inmate of the virtuous breast?
Declare the various methods you've essay'd
To court and win the bright celestial maid.
But first, though harsh the task, each beauteous fair
Her ruling passion must with truth declare.
From evil habits own'd, from faults confess'd,
Alone we trace the secrets of the breast.
Eup. Bred in the regal splendours of a court,
Where pleasures, dress'd in every shape, resort.
I tried the pow'r of pomp and costly glare,
Nor e'er found room for thought, or time for pray'r:
In diff'rent follies ev'ry hour I spent;
I shunn'd Reflection, yet I sought Content.

My hours were shar'd betwixt the park and play,
And music serv'd to waste the tedious day;
Yet softest airs no more with joy I heard,
If any sweeter warbler was preferr'd;
The dance succeeded, and succeeding, tir'd,
If some more graceful dancer were admir'd.
No sounds but flatt'ry ever sooth'd my ear;
Ungentle truths I knew not how to bear.
The anxious day induc'd the sleepless night,
And my vex'd spirit never knew delight:
Coy Pleasure mock'd me with delusive charms,
Still the thin shadow fled my clasping arms;
Or if some actual joy I seem'd to taste,
Another's pleasures laid my blessings waste:
One truth I prov'd, that lurking Envy hides
In ev'ry heart where Vanity presides.
A fairer face would rob my soul of rest,
And fix a scorpion in my wounded breast.
Or, if my elegance of form prevail'd,
And haply her inferior graces fail'd,
Yet still some cause of wretchedness I found,
Some barbed shaft my shatter'd peace to wound.
Perhaps her gay attire exceeded mine —
When she was finer, how could I be fine?

Silv. Pardon my interruption, beauteous maid,
Can truth have prompted what you just have said?
What! can the poor pre-eminence of dress
Ease the pain'd heart, or give it happiness?
Or can you think your robes, though rich and fine,
Possess intrinsic value more than mine?

Ura. So close our nature is to vice allied,
Our very comforts are the source of pride;

And dress, so much corruption reigns within,
Is both the consequence and cause of sin.
Cle. Of Happiness unfound I too complain,
Sought in a diff'rent path, but sought in vain.
I sigh'd for fame, I languish'd for renown,
I would be flatter'd, prais'd, admir'd, and known.
On daring wing my mounting spirit soar'd,
And Science through her boundless fields explor'd:
I scorn'd the salique laws of pedant schools,
Which chain our genius down by tasteless rules:
I long'd to burst these female bonds, which held
My sex in awe, by vanity impell'd:
To boast each various faculty of mind,
Thy graces, Pope, with Johnson's learning join'd:
Like Swift, with strongly pointed ridicule,
To brand the villain, and abash the fool:
To judge with taste, with spirit to compose,
Now mount in epic, now descend to prose;
To join, like Burke, the Beauteous and Sublime,
Or build, with Milton's art, "the lofty rhyme:"
Through Fancy's fields I rang'd; I strove to hit
Melmoth's chaste style, and Prior's easy wit;
Thy classic graces, Mason, to display,
And court the Muse of Elegy with Gray:
I rav'd of Shakspeare's flame, and Dryden's rage,
And ev'ry charm of Otway's melting page.
I talk'd by rote the jargon of the schools,
Of critic laws and Aristotle's rules;
Of passion, sentiment, and style, and grace,
And unities of action, time, and place.
The daily duties of my life forgot,
To study fiction, incident, and plot:

Howe'er the conduct of my life might err,
Still my dramatic plans were regular.
Ura. Who aims at ev'ry science, soon will find
The field how vast, how limited the mind.
Cle. Abstruser studies soon my fancy caught,
The poet in th' astronomer forgot:
The schoolmen's systems now my mind employ'd,
Their crystal Spheres, their Atoms, and their Void.
Newton and Halley all my soul inspir'd,
And numbers less than calculations fir'd;
Descartes and Euclid shar'd my varying breast,
And plans and problems all my soul possess'd.
Less pleas'd to sing inspiring Phœbus' ray
Than mark the flaming comet's devious way.
The pale moon dancing on the silver stream,
And the mild lustre of her trembling beam,
No more could charm my philosophic pride,
Which sought her influence on the flowing tide.
No more ideal beauties fir'd my thought,
Which only facts and demonstrations sought.
Let common eyes, I said, with transport view
The earth's bright verdure, or the heav'ns soft blue,
False is the pleasure, the delight is vain,
Colours exist but in the vulgar brain.
I now with Locke trod metaphysic soil,
Now chas'd coy Nature through the tracts of Boyle;
To win the wreath of Fame, by Science twin'd,
More than the love of Science fir'd my mind.
I seized on Learning's superficial part,
And title-page and index got by heart;
Some learn'd authority I still would bring
To grace my talk, and prove — the plainest thing:

This the chief transport I from science drew,
That all might know how much Cleora knew.
Not love, but wonder, I aspir'd to raise,
And miss'd affection, while I grasp'd at praise.
Pas. To me, no joys could pomp or fame impart;
Far softer thoughts possess'd my virgin heart.
No prudent parent form'd my ductile youth,
Nor led my footsteps in the paths of truth.
Left to myself to cultivate my mind,
Pernicious novels their soft entrance find:
Their pois'nous influence led my mind astray;
I sigh'd for something, what, I could not say.
I fancied virtues which were never seen,
And died for heroes who have never been;
I sicken'd with disgust at sober sense,
And loath'd the pleasures worth and truth dispense;
I scorn'd the manners of the world I saw;
My guide was fiction, and romance my law.
Distemper'd thoughts my wand'ring fancy fill,
Each wind a zephyr, and each brook a rill;
I found adventures in each common tale,
And talk'd and sigh'd to ev'ry passing gale;
Convers'd with echoes, woods, and shades, and bow'rs,
Cascades and grottos, fields, and streams, and flow'rs.
Retirement, more than crowds, had learn'd to please;
For treach'rous Leisure feeds the soft disease.
There, plastic Fancy ever moulds at will
Th' obedient image with a dang'rous skill;
The charming fiction, with alluring art,
Awakes the passions, and infects the heart:
A fancied heroine, an ideal wife,
I loath'd the offices of real life.

These all were dull and tame; I long'd to prove
The gen'rous ardours of unequal love;
Some marvel still my wayward heart must strike,
Or prince, or peasant, each had charms alike:
Whate'er inverted nature, custom, law,
With joy I courted, and with transport saw.
In the dull walk of Virtue's quiet round,
No aliment my fever'd fancy found;
Each duty to perform observant still,
But those which God and Nature bade me fill.

El. [*to Urania.*] O save me from the errors of deceit,
And all the dangers wealth and beauty meet.

Pas. Reason perverted, Fancy on her throne,
My soul to all my sex's softness prone;
I neither spoke nor look'd as mortal ought;
To Sense abandon'd, and by Folly taught;
A victim to Imagination's sway,
Which stole my health, and rest, and peace away:
Professions, void of meaning, I receiv'd,
And still I found them false — and still believ'd:
Imagin'd all who courted me, approv'd;
Who prais'd, esteem'd me; and who flatter'd, lov'd.
Fondly I hop'd (now vain those hopes appear)
Each man was faithful, and each maid sincere.
Still Disappointment mock'd the ling'ring day;
Still new-born wishes led my soul astray.
When in the rolling year no joy I find,
I trust the next, the next will sure be kind.
The next, fallacious as the last appears,
And sends me on to still remoter years.

They come, they promise —but forget to give:
I live not, but I still intend to live.
At length, deceiv'd in all my schemes of bliss,
I join'd these three in search of Happiness.
El. Is this the world of which we want a sight?
Are these the beings who are call'd polite?
Syl. If so, oh, gracious Heav'n! hear Sylvia's prayer;
Preserve me still in humble virtue here!
Far from such baneful pleasures may I live,
And keep, O keep me, from the taint they give!
Lau. No love of Fame my torpid bosom warms,
No Fancy soothes me, and no Pleasure charms:
Yet still remote from Happiness I stray,
No guiding star illumes my trackless way.
My mind, nor wit misleads, nor passion goads,
But the dire rust of indolence corrodes;
This eating canker, with malignant stealth,
Destroys the vital pow'rs of moral health.
Till now, I've slept on Life's tumultuous tide,
No principle of action for my guide.
From ignorance my chief misfortunes flow;
I never wish'd to learn, or car'd to know.
With ev'ry folly slow-pac'd Time beguil'd:
In size a woman, but in soul a child.
In slothful ease my moments crept away,
And busy trifles fill'd the tedious day;
I liv'd extempore, as Fancy fir'd,
As Chance directed, or Caprice inspir'd:
Too indolent to think, too weak to choose,
Too soft to blame, too gentle to refuse;

My character was stampt from those around;
The figures they, my mind the simple ground:
Fashion, with monstrous forms, the canvass stain'd,
Till nothing of my genuine self remain'd:
My pliant soul from Chance receiv'd its bent,
And neither good perform'd, nor evil meant.
From right to wrong, from vice to virtue thrown,
No character possessing of its own.
To shun fatigue I made my only law;
Yet ev'ry night my wasted spirits saw.
No plan e'er mark'd the duties of the day,
Which stole in tasteless apathy away:
No energy inform'd my languid mind;
No joy the idle e'er must hope to find.
Weak indecision all my actions sway'd;
The day was lost before the choice was made.
Though more to folly than to guilt inclin'd,
A drear vacuity possess'd my mind.
Too old with infant sports to be amus'd,
Unfit for converse, and to books unus'd,
The wise avoided me, they could not hear
My senseless prattle with a patient ear.
I sought retreat, but found, with strange surprise,
Retreat is pleasant only to the wise;
The crowded world by vacant minds is sought,
Because it saves th' expense and pain of thought.
Disgusted, restless, ev'ry plan amiss,
I come with these in search of Happiness.
Ura. O happy they for whom, in early age,
Enlight'ning knowledge spreads her letter'd page!
Teaches each headstrong passion to control,
And pours her lib'ral lesson on the soul!

Ideas grow from books, their nat'ral food,
As aliment is chang'd to vital blood.
Though faithless Fortune strip her vot'ry bare,
Though Malice haunt him, and though Envy tear,
Nor time, nor chance, nor want, can e'er destroy
This soul-felt solace, and this bosom joy!

Cle. We thus united by one common fate,
Each discontented with her present state,
One common scheme pursue; resolv'd to know
If Happiness can e'er be found below.

Ura. Your candour, beauteous damsels, I approve,
Your foibles pity, and your merits love.
But ere I say the methods you must try
To gain the glorious prize for which you sigh,
Your fainting strength and spirits must be cheer'd
With a plain meal, by Temperance prepar'd.

Flo. No luxury our humble board attends;
But Love and Concord are its smiling friends.

SONG.

I.

Hail artless Simplicity, beautiful maid,
In the genuine attractions of Nature array'd;
Let the rich and the proud, and the gay and the vain,
Still laugh at the graces that move in thy train.

II.

No charm in thy modest allurements they find;
The pleasures they follow a sting leave behind.
Can criminal passion enrapture the breast
Like virtue, with peace and serenity blest?

III.

O would you Simplicity's precepts attend,
Like us, with delight at her altar you'd bend;
The pleasures she yields would with joy be embrac'd;
You'd practise from virtue, and love them from taste.

IV.

The linnet enchants us the bushes among;
Though cheap the musician, yet sweet is the song;
We catch the soft warbling in air as it floats,
And with ecstasy hang on the ravishing notes.

V.

Our water is drawn from the clearest of springs,
And our food nor disease nor satiety brings;
Our mornings are cheerful, our labours are blest,
Our ev'nings are pleasant, our nights crown'd with rest.

VI.

From our culture yon garden its ornament finds,
And we catch at the hint for improving our minds;
To live to some purpose we constantly try,
And we mark by our actions the days as they fly.

VII.

Since such are the joys that Simplicity yields,
We may well be content with our woods and our fields:
How useless to us, then, ye great, were your wealth,
When without it we purchase both pleasure and health!

[*They retire into the Cottage.*

SCENE — *A Rural Entertainment.*

FLORELLA, EUPHELIA, CLEORA, LAURINDA, PASTORELLA.

FLORELLA (*sings*).

I.

While Beauty and Pleasure are now in their prime,
And Folly and Fashion expect our whole time,
Ah! let not those phantoms our wishes engage;
Let us live so in youth, that we blush not in age.

II.

Though the vain and the gay may allure us awhile,
Yet let not their flatt'ry our prudence beguile;
Let us covet those charms that will never decay,
Nor listen to all that deceivers can say.

III.

" How the tints of the rose and the jasmine's perfume!
" The eglantine's fragrance, the lilac's gay bloom,
" Though fair and though fragrant, unheeded may lie,
" For that neither is sweet when Florella is by."

IV.

I sigh not for beauty, nor languish for wealth,
But grant me, kind Providence, virtue and health;
Then, richer than kings, and as happy as they,
My days shall pass sweetly and swiftly away.

V.

When age shall steal on me, and youth is no more,
And the moralist Time shakes his glass at my door,
What charm in lost beauty or wealth should I find?
My treasure, my wealth, is a sweet peace of mind.

VI.

That peace I'll preserve, then, as pure as was giv'n,
And taste in my bosom an earnest of Heav'n;
Thus Virtue and Wisdom can warm the cold scene,
And sixty may flourish as gay as sixteen.

VII.

And when long I the burden of life shall have borne,
And death with his sickle shall cut the ripe corn,
Resign'd to my fate, without murmur or sigh,
I'll bless the kind summons, and lie down and die.

Eup. Thus sweetly pass the houfs of rural ease:
Here life is bliss, and pleasures truly please.

Pas. With joy we view the dangers we have past,
Assur'd we've found felicity at last.

Flo. Esteem none happy by their outward air;
All have their portion of allotted care.
Though Wisdom wears the semblance of content,
When the full heart with agony is rent,
Secludes its anguish from the public view,
And by secluding, learns to conquer too:
Denied the fond indulgence to complain,
The aching heart its peace may best regain.
By love directed, and in mercy meant,
Are trials suffer'd and afflictions sent;
To stem impetuous Passion's furious tide,
To curb the insolence of prosp'rous Pride,

To wean from earth, and bid our wishes soar
To that blest clime where pain shall be no more;
Where wearied Virtue shall for refuge fly,
And ev'ry tear be wip'd from ev'ry eye.

Cle. List'ning to you, my heart can never cease
To rev'rence Virtue, and to sigh for peace.

Flo. Know, e'en Urania, that accomplish'd fair,
Whose goodness makes her Heav'n's peculiar care,
Though born to all that affluence can bestow,
Has felt the deep reverse of human woe:
Yet meek in grief, and patient in distress,
She knew the hand that wounds has pow'r to bless,
Grateful she bows, for what is left her still,
To HIM whose love dispenses good and ill;
To HIM who, while his bounty thousands fed,
Had not himself a place to lay his head;
To HIM who, that he might our wealth insure,
Though rich himself, consented to be poor.
Taught by his precepts, by his practice taught,
Her will submitted, and resign'd her thought,
Through faith she looks beyond this dark abode
To scenes of glory near the throne of God.

Enter URANIA, SYLVIA, ELIZA.

Ura. Since, gentle Nymphs, my friendship to obtain,
You've sought with eager step this peaceful plain,
My honest counsel with attention hear,
Though plain, well meant, imperfect, yet sincere:
What from maturer years alone I've known,
What time has taught me, and experience shown,

No polish'd phrase my artless speech will grace,
But unaffected candour fill its place:
My lips shall Flatt'ry's smooth deceit refuse,
And truth be all the eloquence I'll use.
Know then, that life's chief happiness and woe,
From good or evil education flow;
And hence our future dispositions rise;
The vice we practise, or the good we prize.
When pliant Nature any form receives,
That precept teaches or example gives,
The yielding mind with virtue should be grac'd,
For first impressions seldom are effac'd.
Then holy habits, then chastis'd desires,
Should regulate disorder'd Nature's fires.
If Ignorance, then, her iron sway mantain,
If Prejudice preside, or passion reign,
If Vanity preserve her native sway,
If selfish tempers cloud the op'ning day,
If no kind hand impetuous pride restrain,
But for the wholesome curb we give the rein,
The erring principle is rooted fast,
And fix'd the habit that through life may last.

Pas. With heartfelt penitence we now deplore
Those squander'd hours that time can ne'er restore.

Ura. Euphelia sighs for flatt'ry, dress, and show:
Too common sources these of female woe.
In Beauty's sphere pre-eminence to find,
She slights the culture of th' immortal Mind.
I would not rail at Beauty's charming pow'r,
I would but have her aim at something more;
The fairest symmetry of form or face,
From intellect receives its highest grace;

The brightest eyes ne'er dart such piercing fires
As when a soul irradiates and inspires.
Beauty with reason needs not quite dispense,
And coral lips may sure speak common sense:
Beauty makes Virtue lovelier still appear;
Virtue makes Beauty more divinely fair;
Confirms its conquest o'er the willing mind,
And those your beauties gain, your virtues bind.
Yet would Ambition's fire your bosom fill;
Its flame repress not — be ambitious still;
Let nobler views your best attention claim,
The object chang'd, the energy the same:
Those very passions which our heart invade,
If rightly pointed, blessings may be made,
Indulge the true ambition to excel
In that best art — the art of living well.
But first extirpate from your youthful breast
That rankling torment which destroys your rest:
All other faults may take a higher aim,
But hopeless Envy must be still the same,
Some other passions may be turn'd to good,
But Envy must subdue, or be subdu'd.
This fatal gangrene to our moral life,
Rejects all palliatives, and asks the knife;
Excision spar'd, it taints the vital part,
And spreads its deadly venom to the heart.

Eup. Unhappy those to bliss who seek the way,
In pow'r superior, or in splendour gay.
Inform'd by thee, no more vain man shall find
The charm of flatt'ry taint Euphelia's mind:
By thee instructed, still my views shall rise,
Nor stop at any mark beneath the skies.

Ura. In fair Laurinda's uninstructed mind,
The want of culture, not of sense, we find.
Whene'er you sought the good, or shunn'd the ill,
'Twas more from temper than from principle:
Your random life to no just rules reduc'd,
'Twas chance the virtue or the vice produc'd,
The casual goodness *Impulse* has to boast,
Like morning dews, or transient show'rs, is lost;
While Heav'n-taught virtue pours her constant tide,
Like streams by living fountains still supplied.
Be wisdom still, though late, your earnest care,
Nor waste the precious hours in vain despair:
Associate with the good, attend the sage,
And meekly listen to experienc'd age.
What, if acquirements you have fail'd to gain,
Such as the wise may want, the bad attain;
Yet still Religion's sacred treasures lie
Inviting, open, plain to ev'ry eye;
For ev'ry age, for ev'ry genius fit,
Nor limited to science nor to wit;
Not bound by taste, to genius not confin'd,
But all may learn the truths for all design'd.
Though low the talents, and the acquirements small,
The gift of grace divine is free to all;
She calls, solicits, courts you to be blest,
And points to mansions of eternal rest.
And when advanc'd in years, matur'd in sense,
Think not with farther care you may dispense:
'Tis fatal to the int'rests of the soul
To stop the race before we've reach'd the goal;
For nought our higher progress can preclude
So much as thinking we're already good.

The human heart ne'er knows a state of rest:
Bad leads to worse, and better tends to best.
We either gain or lose, we sink or rise,
Nor rests our struggling Nature till she dies:
Then place the standard of Perfection high;
Pursue and grasp it, e'en beyond the sky.

Lau. O that important Time could back return
Those mis-spent hours whose loss I deeply mourn!
Accept, just Heav'n, my penitence sincere,
My heartfelt anguish, and my fervent pray'r.

Ura. I pity Pastorella's hapless fate,
By nature gentle, gen'rous, mild, and great:
One false propension all her pow'rs confin'd,
And chain'd her finer faculties of mind;
Yet ev'ry virtue might have flourish'd there
With early culture and maternal care.

If good we plant not, Vice will fill the place,
And rankest weeds the richest soils deface.
Learn, how ungovern'd thoughts the mind pervert,
And to disease all nourishment convert.
Ah! happy she, whose wisdom learns to find
A healthful fancy, and a well train'd mind.
A sick man's wildest dreams less wild are found
Than the day-visions of a mind unsound.
Disorder'd phantasies indulg'd too much,
Like harpies, always taint whate'er they touch.
Fly, soothing Solitude! fly, vain Desire!
Fly such soft verse as fans the dang'rous fire!
Seek action; 'tis the scene which virtue loves:
The vig'rous sun not only shines, but moves.
From sickly thoughts with quick abhorrence start,
And rule the fancy if you'd rule the heart:

By active goodness, by laborious schemes,
Subdue wild visions, and delusive dreams.
No earthly good a Christian's views should bound,
For ever rising should his aims be found.
Leave that fictitious good your fancy feigns,
For scenes where real bliss eternal reigns:
Look to that region of immortal joys,
Where fear disturbs not, nor possession cloys;
Beyond what Fancy forms of rosy bow'rs,
Or blooming chaplets of unfading flow'rs;
Fairer than e'er imagination drew,
Or poet's warmest visions ever knew,
Press eager onward to those blissful plains
Where life eternal, joy perpetual reigns.

Pas. I mourn the errors of my thoughtless youth,
And long, with thee, to tread the paths of truth.

Ura. Learning is all the bright Cleora's aim;
She seeks the loftiest pinnacle of fame;
On interdicted ground presumes to stand,
And grasps at Science with a vent'rous hand;
The privilege of Man she dares invade,
And tears the chaplet from his laurel'd head.
Why found her merit on a foreign claim?
Why lose a substance to acquire a name?
Let the proud sex possess their vaunted pow'rs;
Be other triumphs, other glories, ours!
The gentler charms which wait on female life,
Which grace the daughter and adorn the wife,
Be these our boast; yet these may well admit
Of various knowledge, and of blameless wit;
Of sense, resulting from a nurtur'd mind,
Of polish'd converse, and of taste refin'd:

Of that quick intuition of the best,
Which feels the graceful, and rejects the rest;
Which finds the right by shorter ways than rules:
An art which Nature teaches — not the schools.
Thus conqu'ring Sévigné the heart obtains,
While Dacier only admiration gains.
Know, fair Aspirer, could you even hope
To speak like Stonhouse, or to write like Pope,
To all the wonders of the Poet's lyre,
Join all that taste can add, or wit inspire,
With every various pow'r of learning fraught,
The flow of style and the sublime of thought;
Yet, if the milder graces of the mind,
Graces peculiar to the sex design'd,
Good nature, patience, sweetness void of art;
If these embellish'd not your virgin heart,
You might be dazzling, but not truly bright;
Might glare, but not emit a useful light;
A meteor, not a star, you would appear;
For Woman shines but in her proper sphere.
Accomplishments by Heav'n were sure design'd,
Less to adorn than to amend the mind:
Each should contribute to this gen'ral end,
And all to virtue, as their centre, tend.
Th' acquirements, which our best esteem invite,
Should not project, but soften, mix, unite:
In glaring light not strongly be display'd,
But sweetly lost, and melted into shade.
Cle. Confus'd with shame, to thy reproofs I bend,
Thou best adviser, and thou truest friend:
From thee I learn to judge and act aright,
Humility with Knowledge to unite:

The finish'd character must both combine;
The perfect woman must in either shine.

Ura. Florella shines adorn'd with every grace,
Her heart all virtue as all charms her face:
Above the wretched and below the great,
Kind Heav'n has fix'd her in a middle state;
The demon Fashion never warp'd her soul,
Her passions move at Piety's control;
Her eyes the movements of her heart declare,
For what she dares to be, she dares appear;
Unlectur'd in Dissimulation's school,
To smile by precept, and to blush by rule;
Her thoughts ingenuous, ever open lie,
Nor shrink from close Inspection's keenest eye;
No dark disguise about her heart is thrown;
'Tis Virtue's int'rest fully to be known;
Her nat'ral sweetness ev'ry heart obtains;
What Art and Affectation miss, she gains.
She smooths the path of my declining years,
Augments my comforts, and divides my cares.

Pas. O sacred Friendship! O exalted state!
The choicest bounty of indulgent fate!

Ura. Let Woman then her real good discern,
And her true int'rests of Urania learn;
As some fair violet, loveliest of the glade,
Sheds its mild fragrance on the lonely shade,
Withdraws its modest head from public sight,
Nor courts the Sun, nor seeks the glare of light;
Should some rude hand profanely dare intrude,
And bear its beauties from its native wood,
Expos'd abroad its languid colours fly,
Its form decays, and all its odours die;

So Woman, born to dignify retreat,
Unknown to flourish, and unseen be great,
To give domestic life its sweetest charm,
With softness polish, and with virtue warm,
Fearful of Fame, unwilling to be known,
Should seek but Heav'n's applauses, and her own;
Hers be the task to seek the lonely cell
Where modest want and silent anguish dwell;
Raise the weak head, sustain the feeble knees,
Cheer the cold heart, and chase the dire disease.
The splendid deeds, which only seek a name,
Are paid their just reward in present fame:
But know, the awful all-disclosing day,
The long arrear of secret worth shall pay;
Applauding Saints shall hear with fond regard,
And HE, who witness'd here, shall there reward.

Euph. With added grace she pleads Religion's cause,
Who from her life her virtuous lesson draws.

Ura. In vain, ye fair, from place to place you roam,
For that true peace which must be found at home;
Nor change of fortune, nor of scene can give
The bliss you seek, which in the soul must live.
Then look no more abroad; in your own breast
Seek the true seat of happiness and rest.
Nor small, my friends, the vigilance I ask;
Watch well yourselves; this is the Christian's task.
The cherish'd sin by each must be assail'd,
New efforts added, where the past have fail'd;
The darling error check'd, the will subdu'd,
The heart by penitence and pray'r renew'd.

Nor hope for *perfect* happiness below;
Celestial plants on earth reluctant grow:
He who our frail mortality did bear,
Though free from sin, was not exempt from care.
Cle. Let's join to bless that Pow'r who brought us here,
Adore his goodness, and his will revere:
Assur'd that Peace exists but in the mind,
And Piety alone that peace can find.
Ura. In its true light this transient life regard:
This is a state of trial, not reward.
Though rough the passage, peaceful is the port,
The bliss is perfect, the probation short.
Of human wit beware the fatal pride:
A useful follower, but a dang'rous guide:
On holy Faith's aspiring pinions rise;
Assert your birth-right, and assume the skies.

Fountain of Being, teach us to devote
To Thee each purpose, action, word, and thought!
Thy grace our hope, thy love our only boast,
Be all distinctions in the Christian lost!
Be this in ev'ry state our wish alone,
Almighty, Wise, and Good, Thy will be done.

ODE TO CHARITY.

TO BE PERFORMED BY THE CHARACTERS OF THE PIECE.

I.

O CHARITY, divinely wise,
Thou meek-ey'd Daughter of the skies!
From the pure fountain of eternal light,
Where fair, immutable, and ever bright,
The Beatific vision shines,
Where Angel with Archangel joins,
In choral songs to sing HIS praise,
Parent of Life, Ancient of Days,
Who was ere Time existed, and shall be
Through the wide round of vast Eternity,
O come, thy warm celestial beams impart,
Enlarge my feelings and expand my heart!

II.

Descend from radiant realms above,
Thou effluence of that boundless love
Whence joy and peace in streams unsullied flow,
O deign to make thy lov'd abode below!
Though sweeter strains adorn'd my tongue
Than Saint conceiv'd or Seraph sung,
And though my glowing fancy caught
Whatever Art or Nature taught,
Yet if this hard unfeeling heart of mine
Ne'er felt thy force, O Charity divine!
An empty shadow Science would be found:
My knowledge ignorance, my wit a sound.

III.

Though my prophetic spirit knew
To bring futurity to view,
Without thy aid e'en this would nought avail,
For Tongues shall cease, and Prophecies shall fail.
Come, then, thou sweet immortal guest,
Shed thy soft influence o'er my breast,
Bring with thee Faith, divinely bright,
And Hope, fair harbinger of light,
To clear each mist with their pervading ray,
To fit my soul for Heav'n, and point the way;
There perfect Happiness her sway maintains;
For there the God of Peace for ever reigns.

THE

BAS BLEU:

OR,

CONVERSATION.

ADDRESSED TO MRS. VESEY.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following trifle owes it birth and name to the mistake of a Foreigner of Distinction, who gave the literal appellation of the *Bas-bleu* to a small party of friends, who had been often called, by way of pleasantry, the *Blue Stockings*. These little Societies have been sometimes misrepresented. They were composed of persons distinguished, in general, for their rank, talents, or respectable character, who met frequently at Mrs. *Vesey*'s and at a few other houses, for the sole purpose of conversation, and were different in no respect from other parties, but that the company did not play at cards.

May the Author be permitted to bear her grateful testimony (which will not be suspected of flattery, now that most of the persons named in this Poem are gone down to the grave) to the many pleasant and instructive hours she had the honour to pass in this company; in which learning was as little disfigured by pedantry, good taste as little tinctured by affectation, and general conversation as little disgraced by calumny, levity, and the other censurable errors with which it is too commonly tainted, as has perhaps been known in any society.

THE BAS BLEU:

OR,

CONVERSATION.

VESEY, of Verse the judge and friend,
Awhile my idle strain attend:
Not with the days of early Greece,
I mean to ope my slender piece;
The rare Symposium to proclaim
Which crown'd th' Athenians' social name;
Or how ASPASIA's parties shone,
The first *Bas-bleu* at Athens known;
Where SOCRATES unbending sat,
With ALCIBIADES in chat;
And PERICLES vouchsafed to mix
Taste, wit, and mirth, with politics.
Nor need I stop my tale to show,
At least to readers such as you,
How all that Rome esteem'd polite,
Supp'd with LUCULLUS every night;
LUCULLUS, who, from Pontus come,
Brought conquests, and brought cherries home.
Name but the suppers in th' Appollo,
What classic images will follow!
How wit flew round, while each might take
Conchylia from the Lucrine lake;
And Attic Salt, and Garum Sauce,
And Lettuce from the Isle of Cos;

The first and last from Greece transplanted,
Us'd here — because the rhyme I wanted:
How pheasant's heads, with cost collected,
And Phenicopters' stood neglected,
To laugh at SCIPIO's lucky hit,
POMPEY's bon-mot, or CÆSAR's wit!
Intemperance, list'ning to the tale,
Forgot the Mullet growing * stale;
And Admiration, balanc'd, hung
'Twixt PEACOCKS' brains, and TULLY's tongue.
I shall not stop to dwell on these,
But be as epic as I please,
And plunge at once *in medias res.*
To prove the privilege I plead,
I'll quote some Greek I cannot read;
Stunn'd by Authority you yield,
And I, not reason, keep the field.
Long was Society o'er-run
By Whist, that desolating Hun;
Long did Quadrille despotic sit,
That Vandal of colloquial wit;
And Conversation's setting light
Lay half-obscur'd in Gothic night.
At length the mental shades decline,
Colloquial wit begins to shine;
Genius prevails, and Conversation
Emerges into *Reformation.*
The vanquish'd triple crown to you,
BOSCAWEN sage, bright MONTAGU,

* Seneca says, that in his time the Romans were arrived at such a pitch of luxury, that the Mullet was reckoned stale which did not die in the hands of the guest.

Divided, fell; — your cares in haste
Rescued the ravag'd realms of Taste;
And LYTTELTON's accomplish'd name,
And witty PULTENEY shar'd the fame;
The Men not bound by pedant rules,
Nor Ladies* *Précieuses ridicules;*
For polish'd WALPOLE show'd the way,
How wits may be both learn'd and gay;
And CARTER taught the female train,
The deeply wise are never vain;
And she who SHAKSPEARE's wrongs redrest,
Prov'd that the brightest are the best.
This just deduction still they drew,
And well they practis'd what they knew;
Nor taste, nor wit, deserves applause,
Unless still true to Critic laws;
Good sense, of faculties the best,
Inspire and regulate the rest.
Oh! how unlike the wit that fell,
RAMBOUILLET!† at thy quaint Hotel;

* See MOLIERE's Comedy.

† The Society at the Hôtel de RAMBOUILLET, though composed of the most polite and ingenious persons in France, was much tainted with affectation and false taste. See VOITURE, MÉNAGE, &c.

The late Earl of MANSFIELD told the Author, that when he was Ambassador at Paris, he was assured that it had not been unusual for those persons of a purer taste, who frequented these Assemblies, to come out from their Society so weary of wit and laboured ingenuity, that they used to express the comfort they felt in their emancipation, by saying, — *Allons! faisons des solécismes!*"

Where point, and turn, and équivoque,
Distorted every word they spoke!
All so intolerably bright,
Plain Common Sense was put to flight;
Each speaker, so ingenious ever,
'Twas tiresome to be quite so clever;
There twisted Wit forgot to please,
And Mood and Figure banish'd ease:
No votive altar smok'd to thee,
Chaste Queen, divine Simplicity!
But forc'd Conceit, which ever fails,
And stiff Antithesis prevails;
Uneasy rivalry destroys
Society's unlabour'd joys:
NATURE, of stilts and fetters tir'd,
Impatient from the Wits retir'd;
Long time the Exile houseless stray'd,
Till SÉVIGNÉ receiv'd the maid.
Though here she comes to bless our isle,
Not universal is her smile.
Muse! snatch the lyre which CAMBRIDGE strung,
When he the *empty ball-room* sung;
'Tis tun'd above thy pitch, I doubt,
And thou no music wouldst draw out:
Yet, in a lower note, presume
To sing the full dull Drawing-room.*
Where the dire *Circle* keeps its station,
Each common phrase is an oration;
And cracking fans, and whisp'ring Misses,
Compose their Conversation blisses.

* These dull and formal parties now scarcely exist, having been swallowed up in the reigning multitudinous Assemblies.

The matron marks the goodly show,
While the tall daughter eyes the Beau —
The frigid Beau! Ah! luckless fair,
'Tis not for you that studied air;
Ah! not for you that sidelong glance,
And all that charming nonchalance;
Ah! not for you the three long hours
He worshipp'd the Cosmetic powers;
That finish'd head which breathes perfume,
And kills the nerves of half the room;
And all the murders meant to lie
In that large, languishing, grey eye;
Desist: — less wild th' attempt would be,
To warm the snows of Rhodope:
Too cold to feel, too proud to feign,
For him you're wise and fair in vain;
In vain to charm him you intend,
Self is his object, aim, and end.
Chill shade of that affected Peer,
Who dreaded Mirth, come safely here!
For here no vulgar joy effaces
Thy rage for polish, ton, and graces.
Cold Ceremony's leaden hand
Waves o'er the room her poppy wand;
Arrives the stranger; every guest
Conspires to torture the distrest;
At once they rise — so have I seen —
You guess the simile I mean,
Take what comparison you please,
The crowded streets, the swarming bees,
The pebbles on the shores that lie,
The stars which form the galaxy;

These serve t' embellish what is said,
And show, besides, that one has read;—
At once they rise — th' astonish'd guest
Back in a corner slinks, distrest;
Scar'd at the many bowing round,
And shock'd at her own voice's sound,
Forgot the thing she meant to say,
Her words, half-utter'd, die away;
In sweet oblivion down she sinks,
And of her next appointment thinks.
While her loud neighbour on the right,
Boasts what she has to do to-night;
So very much, you'd swear her pride is
To match the labours of ALCIDES;
'Tis true, in hyperbolic measure,
She nobly calls her labours *Pleasure;*
In this unlike ALCMENA's son,
She never means they should be done;
Her fancy of no *limits* dreams,
No *ne plus ultra* stops her schemes;
Twelve! she'd have scorn'd the paltry round,
No Pillars would have mark'd her bound;
CALPE and ABYLA, in vain
Had nodded cross th' opposing main;
A circumnavigator she
On Ton's illimitable sea.
We pass the pleasures vast and various,
Of Routs, not social, but gregarious;
Where high heroic self-denial
Sustains her self-inflicted trial.
Day lab'rors! what an easy life,
To feed ten children and a wife!

No — I my juster pity spare
To the *night* lab'rer's keener care;
And, pleas'd, to gentler scenes retreat,
Where *Conversation* holds her seat.
Small were that art which would ensure
The Circle's boasted quadrature!
See VESEY'S * plastic genius make
A Circle every figure take;
Nay, shapes and forms, which would defy
All science of Geometry;
Isoceles, and Parallel,
Names, hard to speak, and hard to spell!
Th' enchantress wav'd her wand, and spoke!
Her potent wand the Circle broke:
The social Spirits hover round,
And bless the liberated ground.
Ask you what charms this gift dispense?
'Tis the strong spell of COMMON SENSE.
Away dull Ceremony flew,
And with her bore Detraction too.
Nor only Geometric Art,
Does this presiding power impart;
But Chemists too, who want the essence,
Which makes or mars all coalescence,
Of her the secret rare might get,
How different kinds amalgamate:
And he, who wilder studies chose,
Find here a new metempsychose;

* This amiable Lady was remarkable for her talent in breaking the formality of a circle, by inviting her parties to form themselves into little separate groupes.

How forms can other forms assume,
Within her Pythagoric-room;
Or be, and stranger is th' event,
The very things which nature meant;
Nor strive, by art and affectation,
To cross their genuine destination.
Here sober Duchesses are seen,
Chaste Wits, and Critics void of spleen;
Physicians, fraught with real science,
And Whigs and Tories in alliance;
Poets, fulfilling Christian duties,
Just Lawyers, reasonable Beauties;
Bishops who preach, and Peers who pay,
And Countesses who seldom play;
Learn'd Antiquaries, who, from college,
Reject the rust, and bring the knowledge;
And, hear it, *age*, believe it, *youth*, —
Polemics, really seeking truth;
And Travellers of that rare tribe,
Who've *seen* the countries they describe;
Who study'd there, so strange their plan,
Not plants, nor herbs alone, but man;
While Travellers, of other notions,
Scale mountain-tops, and traverse oceans;
As if, so much these themes engross,
The study of mankind — was Moss.
Ladies who point, nor think me partial,
An Epigram as well as MARTIAL;
Yet in all female worth succeed,
As well as those who cannot read.

Right pleasant were the task, I ween,
To name the groupes which fill the scene;

But Rhyme's of such fastidious nature,
She proudly scorns all Nomenclature,
Nor grace our Northern names her lips,
Like HOMER's Catalogue of Ships.
Once — faithful Memory! heave a sigh,
Here ROSCIUS gladden'd every eye.
Why comes not MARO? Far from town,
He rears the Urn to Taste, and BROWN;
Plants Cypress round the Tomb of GRAY,
Or decks his *English Garden* gay;
Whose mingled sweets exhale perfume,
And promise a perennial bloom.
Here, rigid CATO *, awful Sage!
Bold Censor of a thoughtless age,
Once dealt his pointed moral round,
And, not unheeded, fell the sound;
The Muse his honour'd memory weeps,
For CATO now with ROSCIUS sleeps!
Here once HORTENSIUS † lov'd to sit,
Apostate now from social Wit:
Ah! why in wrangling senates waste
The noblest parts, the happiest taste?
Why Democratic Thunders wield,
And quit the Muse's calmer field?
Taste thou the gentler joys they give,
With HORACE ‡, and with LELIUS § live.
Hail, CONVERSATION, soothing Power,
Sweet Goddess of the social hour!

* Dr. JOHNSON.

† This was written in the year 1787, when Mr. EDMUND BURKE had joined the then opposition.

‡ HORACE WALPOLE. § Sir WILLIAM WELLER PEPYS.

Not with more heart-felt warmth, at least,
Does LELIUS bend, thy true High Priest;
Than I the lowest of thy train,
These field-flowers bring to deck thy fane;
Who to thy shrine like him can haste,
With warmer zeal, or purer taste?
O may thy worship long prevail,
And thy true votaries never fail!
Long may thy polish'd altars blaze
With wax-lights' undiminish'd rays!
Still be thy nightly offerings paid,
Libations large of Lemonade.
On silver vases, loaded, rise
The biscuits' ample sacrifice.
Nor be the milk-white streams forgot
Of thirst-assuaging, cool orgeat!
Rise, incense pure from fragrant Tea,
Delicious incense, worthy Thee!
Hail, Conversation, heav'nly fair,
Thou bliss of life, and balm of care,
Still may thy gentle reign extend,
And taste with wit and science blend!
Soft polisher of rugged man,
Refiner of the social plan;
For thee, best solace of his toil,
The sage consumes his midnight oil;
And keeps late vigils, to produce
Materials for thy future use;
Calls forth the else neglected knowledge,
Of school, of travel, and of college.
If none behold, ah! wherefore fair?
Ah! wherefore wise, if none must hear?

Our intellectual ore must shine,
Not slumber idly in the mine.
Let education's moral mint
The noblest images imprint;
Let taste her curious touchstone hold,
To try if standard be the gold;
But 'tis thy commerce, Conversation,
Must give it use by circulation;
That noblest commerce of mankind,
Whose precious merchandize is MIND!
What stoic traveller would try
A sterile soil, and parching sky,
Or dare th' intemperate Northern zone,
If what he saw must ne'er be known?
For this he bids his home farewell;
The joy of seeing is to tell.
Trust me, he never would have stirr'd,
Were he forbid to speak a word;
And Curiosity would sleep,
If her own secrets she must keep:
The bliss of telling what is past
Becomes her rich reward at last.
Who'd mock at death, at danger smile,
To steal one peep at Father Nile;
Who, at Palmira, risk his neck,
Or search the ruins of Balbec:
If these must hide old Nilus' fount,
Nor Lybian tales at home recount;
If those must sink their learned labour,
Nor with their ruins treat a neighbour?
Range — study — think — do all we can,
Colloquial pleasures are for man.

Yet not from low desire to shine
Does Genius toil in learning's mine;
Not to indulge in idle vision,
But strike new light by strong collision.
Of Conversation, wisdom's friend,
This is the object and the end,
Of moral truth, man's proper science,
With sense and learning in alliance,
To search the depths, and thence produce
What tends to practice and to use.
And next in value we shall find
What mends the taste and forms the mind.
If high those truths in estimation,
Whose search is crown'd with demonstration;
To these assign no scanty praise,
Our taste which clear, our views which raise.
For grant that mathematic truth
Best balances the mind of Youth;
Yet scarce the truth of Taste is found
To grow from principles less sound.
O'er books the Mind inactive lies,
Books, the Mind's food, not exercise!
Her vigorous wing she scarcely feels,
'Till use the latent strength reveals;
Her slumb'ring energies call'd forth,
She springs, she mounts, she feels her worth;
And, at her new-found powers elated,
Thinks them not rous'd, but new created.
Enlighten'd spirits! you, who know
What charms from polish'd converse flow,
Speak, for you can, the pure delight
When kindling sympathies unite;

When correspondent tastes impart
Communion sweet from heart to heart;
You ne'er the cold gradations need
Which vulgar souls to union lead;
No dry discussion to unfold
The meaning caught ere well 'tis told:
In taste, in learning, wit, or science,
Still kindred souls demand alliance;
Each in the other joys to find
The image answering to his mind.
But sparks electric only strike
On souls electrical alike;
The flash of intellect expires,
Unless it meet congenial fires:
The language to th' Elect alone
Is, like the Mason's mystery, known;
In vain th' unerring *sign* is made
To him who is not of the *Trade*.
What lively pleasure to divine
The thought implied, the hinted line,
To feel Allusion's artful force,
And trace the image to its source.
Quick Memory blends her scatter'd rays,
'Till Fancy kindles at the blaze;
The works of ages start to view,
And ancient wit elicits new.
  But wit and parts if thus we praise,
What nobler altars should we raise.
Those sacrifices could we see
Which wit, O Virtue! makes to thee.
At once the rising thought to dash,
To quench at once the bursting flash!

The shining mischief to subdue,
And lose the praise and pleasure too!
Though Venus' self, could you detect her,
Imbuing with her richest nectar,
The thought unchaste — to check that thought,
To spurn a fame so dearly bought,
This is high Principle's controul!
This is true continence of Soul!
Blush, heroes, at your cheap renown,
A vanquish'd realm, a plunder'd town!
Your conquests were to gain a name,
This conquest triumphs over Fame;
So pure its essence, 'twere destroy'd
If known, and if commended, void.
Amidst the brightest truths believ'd,
Amidst the fairest deeds achiev'd,
Shall stand recorded and admir'd,
That Virtue sunk what Wit inspir'd.
But let the letter'd, and the fair,
And, chiefly, let the Wit beware;
You, whose warm spirits never fail,
Forgive the hint which ends my tale:
O shun the perils which attend
On wit, on warmth, and heed your friend.
Though Science nurs'd you in her bowers,
Though Fancy crown your brow with flowers,
Each thought though bright invention fill,
Though Attic bees each word distil;
Yet, if one gracious power refuse
Her gentle influence to infuse;
If she withhold her magic spell,
Nor in the social circle dwell;

In vain shall listening crowds approve,
They'll praise you, but they will not love.
What is this power you're loth to mention,
This charm, this witchcraft? 'tis ATTENTION:
Mute Angel, yes; thy looks dispense
The silence of intelligence;
Thy graceful form I well discern,
In act to listen and to learn;
'Tis thou for talents shalt obtain
That pardon Wit would hope in vain:
Thy wondrous power, thy secret charm,
Shall Envy of her sting disarm;
Thy silent flattery sooths our spirit,
And we forgive eclipsing merit;
Our jealous souls no longer burn,
Nor hate thee, though thou shine in turn;
The sweet atonement screens the fault,
And love and praise are cheaply bought.
With mild complacency to hear,
Though somewhat long the tale appear, —
The dull relation to attend,
Which mars the story you could mend;
'Tis more than wit, 'tis moral beauty,
'Tis pleasure rising out of duty.
Nor vainly think the time you waste,
When temper triumphs over taste.

BISHOP BONNER'S GHOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

In the Gardens of the Palace at Fulham is a dark recess; at the end of this stands a Chair, which once belonged to Bishop Bonner. — A certain Bishop of London, more than two hundred years after the death of the aforesaid Bonner, one morning, just as the clock of the Gothic Chapel had struck six, undertook to cut with his own hand a narrow walk through this thicket, which is since called the *Monks-Walk*. He had no sooner begun to clear the way, than, lo! suddenly upstarted from the chair the Ghost of Bishop Bonner, who in a tone of just and bitter indignation, uttered the following Verses.

BISHOP BONNER'S GHOST.*

REFORMER, hold! ah, spare my shade,
Respect the hallow'd dead!
Vain pray'r! I see the op'ning glade,
See utter darkness fled.

Just so your innovating hand
Let in the moral light;
So, chas'd from this bewilder'd land,
Fled intellectual night.

Where now that holy gloom which hid
Fair truth from vulgar ken?
Where now that wisdom which forbid
To think that monks were men?

* The author accompanied the late Bishop PORTEUS when he first went to take possession of the Palace at Fulham. He complained to her that he found no retired walk to which he might withdraw occasionally. She pointed out a spot where such a retreat might be formed; and while he was clearing away the branches, the following verses were written. A few copies only were printed by HORACE WALPOLE, Earl of Orford, at his press at Strawberry Hill.

The tangled mazes of the schools,
Which spread so thick before;
Which knaves entwin'd to puzzle fools,
Shall catch mankind no more.

Those charming intricacies where?
Those venerable lies?
Those legends, once the church's care?
Those sweet perplexities?

Ah! fatal age, whose sons combin'd
Of credit to exhaust us;
Ah! fatal age, which gave mankind
A LUTHER and a FAUSTUS! *

Had only JACK and MARTIN † liv'd,
Our pow'r had slowly fled;
Our influence might have still surviv'd,
Had laymen never read.

For knowledge flew, like magic spell,
By typographic art:
Oh, shame! a peasant now can tell
If priests the truth impart.

Ye councils, pilgrimages, creeds!
Synods, decrees, and rules!
Ye warrants of unholy deeds,
Indulgences and bulls!

* The same Age which brought Heresy into the Church, unhappily introduced Printing among the Arts, by which means the Scriptures were unluckily disseminated among the Vulgar.

† How Bishop BONNER came to have read SWIFT'S Tale of a Tub it may now be in vain to inquire.

Where are ye now? and where, alas!
The pardons we dispense?
And penances, the sponge of sins;
And Peter's holy pence?

Where now the beads, which us'd to swell
Lean virtue's spare amount?
Here only faith and goodness fill
A heretic's account.

But soft — what gracious form appears?
Is this a convent's life?
Atrocious sight! by all my fears,
A prelate with a wife!

Ah! sainted MARY *, not for this
Our pious labours join'd;
The witcheries of domestic bliss
Had shook ev'n GARDINER'S mind.

Hence all the sinful, human ties,
Which mar the cloyster's plan;
Hence all the weak fond charities
Which make man feel for man.

But tortur'd memory vainly speaks
The projects we design'd;
While this apostate Bishop seeks
The freedom of mankind.

* An orthodox Queen of the sixteenth century, who laboured with might and main, conjointly with these two venerable Bishops, to extinguish a dangerous heresy ycleped the Reformation.

Oh, born in ev'ry thing to shake
The systems plann'd by me!
So heterodox, that he would make
Both soul and body free.

Nor clime nor colour stays his hand;
With charity deprav'd,
He would from Thames' to Gambia's Strand,
Have all be free and sav'd.

And who shall change his wayward heart,
His wilful spirit turn?
For those his labours can't convert,
His weakness will not burn.

Ann. Dom. 1900. A GOOD OLD PAPIST.

*** By the lapse of time the three last Stanzas are become unintelligible. Old Chronicles say, that towards the latter end of the 18th century, a bill was brought into the British Parliament, by an active young Reformer, for the Abolition of a *pretended* Traffic of the Human Species. But this only shows how little faith is to be given to the exaggerations of History; for as no vestige of this incredible Trade now remains, we look upon the whole story to have been one of those fictions, not uncommon among Authors, to blacken the memory of former ages.

FLORIO:

A TALE,

FOR FINE GENTLEMEN AND FINE LADIES.

In Two Parts.

TO

THE HONOURABLE

HORACE WALPOLE. *

MY DEAR SIR,

It would be very flattering to me, if I might hope that the little Tale, which I now take the liberty of presenting to you, could amuse a few moments of your tedious indisposition. It is, I confess, but a paltry return for the many hours of agreeable information and elegant amusement which I have received from your spirited and very entertaining writings: yet I am persuaded that you will receive it with favour, as a small offering of esteem and gratitude; as an offering of which the intention alone makes all the little value.

The slight verses, Sir, which I place under your protection, will not, I fear, impress the world with a very favourable idea of my poetical powers: But I shall, at least, be suspected of having some taste, and of keeping good company, when I confess that some of the pleasantest hours of my life have been passed in your conversation. I should be unjust to your very engaging and well-bred turn of wit, if I did not declare that, among all the lively and brilliant things I have heard from you, I do not remember

* Afterwards Earl of Orford.

ever to have heard an unkind or an ungenerous one. Let me be allowed to bear my feeble testimony to your temperate use of this charming faculty, so delightful in itself, but which can only be safely trusted in such hands as yours, where it is guarded by politeness, and directed by humanity.

I have the honour to be,

My Dear Sir,

Your much obliged,

And most obedient,

Humble Servant,

January 27. 1786.

THE AUTHOR.

FLORIO.

PART I.

FLORIO, a youth of gay renown,
Who figur'd much about the town,
Had pass'd, with general approbation,
The modish forms of education;
Knew what was proper to be known,
Th' establish'd jargon of Bon-ton;
Had learnt, with very moderate reading,
The whole new system of good breeding:
He studied to be cold and rude,
Though native feeling would intrude:
Unlucky sense and sympathy,
Spoilt the vain thing he strove to be.
For FLORIO was not meant by nature,
A silly, or a worthless creature:
He had a heart dispos'd to feel,
Had life and spirit, taste and zeal;
Was handsome, generous; but, by fate,
Predestin'd to a large estate!
Hence, all that grac'd his op'ning days,
Was marr'd by pleasure, spoilt by praise.
The Destiny, who wove the thread
Of FLORIO'S being, sigh'd, and said,
"Poor Youth! this cumbrous twist of gold,
"More than my shuttle well can hold,

" For which thy anxious fathers toil'd,
" Thy white and even thread has spoil'd:
" 'Tis this shall warp thy pliant youth
" From sense, simplicity, and truth;
" Thy erring fire, by wealth misled,
" Shall scatter pleasures round thy head,
" When wholesome discipline's control
" Should brace the sinews of thy soul;
" Coldly thou'lt toil for learning's prize,
" For why should he that's rich be wise?"
The gracious Master of mankind,
Who knew us vain, corrupt, and blind,
In mercy, though in anger, said,
That man should earn his daily bread,
His lot inaction renders worse,
While labour mitigates the curse,
The idle, life's worst burdens bear,
And meet, what toil escapes, despair!
Forgive, nor lay the fault on me,
This mixture of mythology;
The Muse of Paradise has deign'd
With truth to mingle fables feign'd;
And though the Bard who would attain
The glories, MILTON, of thy strain,
Will never reach thy style or thoughts,
He may be like thee — in thy faults!
Exhausted FLORIO, at the age
When youth should rush on glory's stage,
When life should open fresh and new,
And ardent hope her schemes pursue;
Of youthful gaiety bereft,
Had scarce an unbroach'd pleasure left;

He found already to his cost,
The shining gloss of life was lost;
And pleasure was so coy a prude,
She fled the more, the more pursued;
Or if o'ertaken and caress'd,
He loath'd and left her when possess'd.
But FLORIO knew the WORLD; that science
Sets sense and learning at defiance;
He thought the World to him was known,
Whereas he only knew the *Town*;
In men this blunder still you find,
All think their little set — Mankind.

Though high renown the youth had gain'd,
No flagrant crimes his life had stain'd,
No tool of falsehood, slave of passion,
But spoilt by CUSTOM, and the FASHION.
Though known among *a certain set*,
He did not like to be in debt;
He shudder'd at the dicer's box,
Nor thought it very heterodox
That tradesmen should be sometimes paid,
And bargains kept as well as made.
His growing credit, as a sinner,
Was that he lik'd to spoil a dinner;
Made pleasure and made business wait,
And still, by system, came too late;
Yet 'twas a hopeful indication,
On which to found a reputation:
Small habits, well pursued, betimes
May reach the dignity of crimes;
And who a juster claim preferr'd,
Than one who always broke his word?

His mornings were not spent in vice,
'Twas lounging, sauntering, eating ice;
Walk up and down St. James's Street,
Full fifty times the youth you'd meet:
He hated cards, detested drinking,
But stroll'd to shun the toil of thinking;
'Twas *doing nothing* was his curse,
Is there a vice can plague us worse?
The wretch who digs the mine for bread,
Or ploughs, that others may be fed,
Feels less fatigue than that decreed
To him who cannot think, or read.
Not all the peril of temptations,
Not all the conflict of the passions,
Can quench the spark of glory's flame,
Or quite extinguish Virtue's name,
Like the true taste for genuine saunter,
Like sloth, the soul's most dire enchanter.
The active fires that stir the breast,
Her poppies charm to fatal rest;
They rule in short and quick succession,
But SLOTH keeps one long, fast possession:
Ambition's reign is quickly clos'd,
Th' usurper rage is soon depos'd;
Intemperance, where there's no temptation,
Makes voluntary abdication;
Of other tyrants short the strife,
But INDOLENCE is king for life:
The despot twists, with soft control,
Eternal fetters round the soul.

Yet though so polish'd FLORIO's breeding,
Think him not ignorant of reading:

For he, to keep him from the vapours,
Subscrib'd at HOOKHAM'S, saw the papers;
Was deep in poet's corner wit;
Knew what was in italics writ;
Explain'd fictitious names at will;
Each gutted syllable could fill.
There oft, in paragraphs, his name
Gave symptom sweet of growing fame;
Though yet they only serv'd to hint
That FLORIO lov'd to see in print,
His ample buckles' * alter'd shape,
His buttons chang'd, his varying cape;
And many a standard phrase was his
Might rival *bore*, or banish *quiz*.
The man who grasps this young renown,
And early starts for fashion's crown,
In time that glorious prize may wield,
Which clubs and ev'n Newmarket yield.
He studied while he dress'd, for true 'tis,
He read *Compendiums*, *Extracts*, *Beauties*,
Abrégés, *Dictionnaires*, *Recueils*,
Mercures, *Journaux*, *Extraits*, and *Feuilles*:
No work in substance now is follow'd,
The Chemic Extract only's swallow'd.
He lik'd those literary cooks
Who skim the cream of others' books;
And ruin half an Author's graces,
By plucking bon-mots from their places.
He wonders any writing sells,
But these spic'd mushrooms and morells.

* Buckles of an enormous size, which nearly covered the shoe, were at this time worn.

His palate works alone can touch,
Where every mouthful is *bonne bouche.*
Some phrase that with the public took
Was all he read of any book;
For plan, detail, arrangement, system,
He let *them* go, and never miss'd 'em.
Of each new Play he saw a part,
And all the *Anas* had by heart:
He found whatever they produce
Is fit for conversation-use;
Learning so ready for display,
A page would prime him for a day:
They cram not with a mass of knowledge,
Which smacks of toil, and smells of college,
Which in the memory useless lies,
Or only makes men — good and wise.
This might have merit once, indeed,
But now for other ends we read.
A friend he had, BELLARIO hight,
A reasoning, reading, learned wight;
At least, with men of FLORIO's breeding,
He was a prodigy of reading.
He knew each stale and vapid lie
In tomes of French Philosophy;
And then, we fairly may presume,
From PYRRHO down to DAVID HUME,
'Twere difficult to single out
A man more full of shallow doubt:
He knew the little sceptic prattle,
The sophist's paltry arts of battle;
Talk'd gravely of th' Atomic dance,
Of moral fitness, fate, and chance;

Admir'd the system of LUCRETIUS,
Whose matchless verse makes nonsense specious!
To this his doctrine owes its merits,
Like pois'nous reptiles kept in spirits;
Though sceptics dull his scheme rehearse,
Who have not souls to taste his verse.
BELLARIO founds his reputation
On dry, stale jokes, about Creation;
Would prove, by argument circuitous,
The combination was fortuitous.
Swore priests' whole trade was to deceive,
And prey on bigots who believe;
With bitter ridicule could jeer,
And had the true free-thinking sneer.
Grave arguments he had in store,
Which have been answer'd o'er and o'er;
And us'd, with wond'rous penetration,
The trite, old trick of false citation;
From ancient Authors fond to quote
A phrase or thought they never wrote.
Upon his highest shelf there stood
The Classics, neatly cut in wood;
And in a more commodious station,
You found them in a French translation:
He swears, 'tis from the Greek he quotes,
But keeps the French — just for the notes.
He worshipp'd certain modern names
Who History write in Epigrams,
In pointed periods, shining phrases,
And all the small poetic daisies
Which crowd the pert and florid style,
Where fact is dropt to raise a smile;

Where notes indecent or profane
Serve to *raise* doubts, but not *explain*:
Where all is spangle, glitter, show,
And truth is overlaid below:
Arts scorn'd by History's sober Muse,
Arts CLARENDON disdain'd to use.
Whate'er the subject of debate,
'Twas larded still with sceptic prate;
Begin whatever theme you will,
In unbelief he lands you still:
The good, with shame I speak it, feel
Not half this proselyting zeal:
While cold their Master's cause to own,
Content to go to Heav'n alone,
The infidel, in liberal trim,
Would carry all the World with him;
Would treat his wife, friend, kindred, nation,
Mankind — with what? Annihilation.
Though FLORIO did not quite believe him,
He thought, why should a friend deceive him?
Much as he priz'd BELLARIO's wit,
He lik'd not all his notions yet;
He thought him charming, pleasant, odd,
But hop'd one might believe in GOD;
Yet such the charms that grac'd his tongue,
He knew not how to think him wrong.
Though FLORIO tried a thousand ways,
Truth's insuppressive torch would blaze:
Where once her flame has burnt, I doubt
If ever it go fairly out.
Yet, under great BELLARIO's care,
He gain'd each day a better air;

With many a leader of renown,
Deep in the learning of the Town,
Who never other science knew,
But what from that prime source they drew;
Pleas'd, to the Opera they repair,
To get recuits of knowledge there;
Mythology gain at a glance,
And learn the Classics from a dance:
In Ovid they ne'er car'd a groat,
How far'd the vent'rous Argonaut;
Yet charm'd they see Medea rise
On fiery dragons to the skies.
For Dido *, though they never knew her
As Maro's magic pencil drew her,
Faithful and fond, and broken-hearted,
Her pious vagabond departed;
Yet, for Didone how they roar!
And *Cara! Cara!* loud encore.
One taste Bellario's soul possess'd,
The master-passion of his breast;
It was not one of those frail joys,
Which, by possession, quickly cloys;
This bliss was solid, constant, true,
'Twas action, and 'twas passion too;
For though the business might be finish'd,
The pleasure scarcely was diminish'd;
Did he ride out, or sit, or walk,
He liv'd it o'er again in talk;
Prolong'd the fugitive delight,
In words by day, in dreams by night.

* Medea and Dido were the two reigning Operas at this time.

'Twas *eating* did his soul allure,
A deep, keen, modish Epicure;
Though once this name, as I opine,
Meant not such men as live to dine;
Yet all our modern Wits assure us,
That's all *they* know of EPICURUS:
They fondly fancy, that repletion
Was the *chief good* of that fam'd Grecian.
To live in gardens full of flowers,
And talk philosophy in bowers,
Or, in the covert of a wood,
To descant on the *sovereign good*,
Might be the notion of their founder,
But they have notions vastly sounder:
Their bolder standards they erect,
To form a more substantial sect;
Old EPICURUS would not own 'em,
A DINNER is *their summum bonum.*
More like you'll find such sparks as these
To EPICURUS' deities;
Like them they mix not with affairs,
But loll and laugh at human cares.
To beaux this difference is allow'd,
They choose a sofa for a cloud.
BELLARIO had embrac'd with glee
This practical philosophy.
Young FLORIO's father had a friend,
And ne'er did Heaven a worthier send;
A cheerful knight of good estate,
Whose heart was warm, whose bounty great.
Where'er his wide protection spread,
The sick were cheer'd, the hungry fed;

Resentment vanish'd, where he came,
And law-suits fled before his name;
The old esteem'd, the young caress'd him,
And all the smiling village bless'd him.
Within his Castle's Gothic gate,
Sate Plenty, and old-fashion'd State;
Scarce Prudence could his bounties stint; —
Such characters are out of print.
O! would kind Heav'n, the age to mend,
A new edition of them send,
Before our tottering Castles fall,
And swarming Nabobs seize on all!
Some little whims he had, 'tis true,
But they were harmless, and were few;
He dreaded nought like alteration,
Improvement still was innovation;
He said, when any change was brewing,
Reform was a fine name for ruin *;
This maxim firmly he would hold,
"*That* always must be good that's old."
The acts which dignify the day
He thought portended its decay:
Nay, fear'd 'twould show a falling State,
If STERNHOLD should give way to TATE.
The Church's downfall he predicted,
Were modern tunes not interdicted:
He scorn'd them all, but crown'd with palm
The man who set the hundredth Psalm.

* These lines were written many years before the French Revolution had in a manner realised Sir GILBERT's idea of REFORM.

Of moderate parts, of moderate wit,
But parts for life and business fit,
Whate'er the theme, he did not fail
At Popery and the French to rail;
And started wide, with fond digression,
To praise the Protestant succession.
Of BLACKSTONE he had read a part,
And all BURN's JUSTICE knew by heart.
He thought man's life too short to waste
On idle things call'd wit and taste.
In books, that he might lose no minute,
His very verse had business in it.
He ne'er had heard of Bards of GREECE,
But had read half of DYER's FLEECE.
His sphere of knowledge still was wider,
His Georgics, "PHILIPS upon Cider."
He could produce, in proper place,
Three apt quotations from "The Chase *;"
And in the hall, from day to day,
Old ISAAC WALTON's *Angler* lay.

This good and venerable knight
One daughter had, his soul's delight:
For charms, no mortal could resist her,
She smil'd like HEBE's youngest sister:
Her life, as lovely as her face,
Each duty mark'd with every grace;
Her native sense improv'd by reading,
Her native sweetness by good breeding:
She had perus'd each choicer sage
Of ancient date, or later age;

* A Poem by Mr. SOMERVILE.

But her best knowledge still she found
On Sacred, not on Classic ground;
'Twas thence her noblest stores she drew,
And well she practis'd what she knew.
Led by Simplicity divine,
She pleas'd and never tried to shine;
She gave to chance each unschool'd feature,
And left her cause to Sense and Nature.

The Sire of FLORIO, ere he died,
Decreed fair CELIA FLORIO's bride:
Bade him his latest wish attend,
And win the daughter of his friend;
When the last rites to him were paid,
He charg'd him to address the maid:
Sir GILBERT's heart the wish approv'd,
For much his ancient friend he lov'd.

Six rapid months like lightning fly,
And the last grey was now thrown by;
FLORIO, reluctant, calls to mind
The orders of a Sire too kind:
Yet go he must; he must fulfil
The hard conditions of the will;
Go, at that precious hour of prime,
Go, at that swarming, bustling time,
When the full town to joy invites,
Distracted with its own delights;
When Pleasure pours from her full urn
Each tiresome transport in its turn;
When Dissipation's altars blaze,
And men run mad a thousand ways;
When, on his tablets, there were found
Engagements for full six weeks round:

Must leave, with grief and desperation,
Three packs of cards of invitation,
And all the ravishing delights
Of slavish days, and sleepless nights.
Ye Nymphs, whom tyrant Power drags down,
With hand despotic, from the town,
When ALMACK's doors wide open stand,
And the gay partner's offer'd hand
Courts to the dance; when steaming rooms,
Fetid with unguents and perfumes,
Invite you to the mobs polite
Of three sure balls in one short night;
You may conceive what FLORIO felt,
And sympathetically melt;
You may conceive the hardship dire,
To lawns and woodlands to retire,
When, freed from Winter's icy chain,
Glad Nature revels on the plain;
When blushing Spring leads on the hours,
And May is prodigal of flow'rs;
When Passion warbles through the grove,
And all is song, and all is love;
When new-born breezes sweep the vale,
And health adds fragrance to the gale.

FLORIO.

PART II.

Six bays, unconscious of their weight,
Soon lodg'd him at Sir Gilbert's gate;
His trusty Swiss, who flew still faster,
Announc'd th' arrival of his master:
So loud the rap which shook the door,
The hall re-echo'd to the roar:
Since first the Castle walls were rear'd,
So dread a sound had ne'er been heard:
The din alarm'd the frighten'd deer,
Who in a corner slunk for fear;
The Butler thought 'twas beat of drum;
The Steward swore the French were come:
It ting'd with red poor Florio's face;
He thought himself in Portland Place.
Short joy! he enter'd, and the gate
Clos'd on him with its pond'rous weight.
Who like Sir Gilbert now was blest?
With rapture he embrac'd his guest.
Fair Celia blush'd, and Florio utter'd
Half sentences, or rather mutter'd
Disjointed words — as, "honour! pleasure!
"Kind! vastly good, Ma'am! beyond measure:"
Tame expletives, with which dull Fashion
Fills vacancies of sense and passion.

Yet, though disciple of cold Art,
FLORIO soon found he had a heart:
He saw; and but that Admiration
Had been too active, too like passion,
Or had he been to *Ton* less true,
Cupid had shot him through and through;
But vainly speeds the surest dart,
Where FASHION's mail defends the heart.
The shaft her cold repulsion found,
And fell, without the pow'r to wound:
For FASHION, with a mother's joy,
Dipp'd in her lake the darling boy;
That lake, whose chilling waves impart
The gift to freeze the warmest heart;
Yet guarded as he was with phlegm,
With such delight he eyed the dame,
Found his cold heart so melt before her,
And felt so ready to adore her,
That FASHION fear'd her son would yield,
And flew to snatch him from the field;
O'er his touch'd heart her Ægis threw,
The Goddess Mother strait he knew:
Her pow'r he own'd; she saw and smil'd,
And claim'd the triumph of her child.
CELIA a table still supplied,
Which modish luxury might deride:
A modest feast the hope conveys,
The Master eats on other days;
While gorgeous banquets oft bespeak
A hungry household all the week.
And decent Elegance was there,
And Plenty with her liberal air,

But vulgar Plenty gave offence,
And shock'd poor FLORIO's nicer sense.
Patient he yielded to his fate,
When good Sir GILBERT piled his plate;
He bow'd submissive, made no question,
But that 'twas sovereign for digestion;
But, such was his unlucky whim,
Plain meats would ne'er agree with him;
Yet feign'd to praise the Gothic treat,
And, if he ate not, seem'd to eat.
In sleep sad FLORIO hop'd to find,
The pleasures he had left behind.
He dreamt, and lo! to charm his eyes,
The form of WELTJE * seem'd to rise;
The gracious vision wav'd his wand,
And banquets sprung to FLORIO's hand;
Th' imaginary savours rose
In tempting odours to his nose.
A bell, not Fancy's false creation,
Gives joyful "note of preparation;"
He starts, he wakes, the bell he hears;
Alas! it rings for morning pray'rs.
But how to spend next tedious morning
Was past his possible discerning;
Unable to amuse himself,
He tumbled every well-rang'd shelf:
This book was dull, and that was wise,
And this was monstrous as to size.
With eager joy he gobbled down
Whate'er related to the town;

* A celebrated Cook and Confectioner.

Whate'er look'd small, whate'er look'd new,
Half-bound, or stitch'd in pink or blue;
Old play-bills, ASTLEY's last year's feats,
And Opera disputes in sheets. *
As these dear records meet his eyes,
Ghosts of departed pleasures rise;
He lays the book upon the shelf,
And leaves the day to spend itself.
To cheat the tedious hours, whene'er
He sallied forth to take the air,
His sympathetic ponies knew
Which way their lord's affections drew;
And, every time he went abroad,
Sought of themselves the London road:
He ask'd each mile of every clown,
How far they reckon'd it to town?
And still his nimble spirits rise,
Whilst thither he directs his eyes;
But when his coursers back he guides,
The sinking Mercury quick subsides.
A week he had resolv'd to stay,
But found a week in every day;
Yet if the gentle maid was by,
Faint pleasure glisten'd in his eye;
Whene'er she spoke, attention hung
On the mild accents of her tongue;
But when no more the room she grac'd,
The slight impression was effac'd.
Whene'er Sir GILBERT's sporting guests
Retail'd old news, or older jests,

* This winter a number of Pamphlets were published by the contending Managers of the Opera.

FLORIO, quite calm, and debonair,
Still humm'd a new Italian air:
He did not even feign to hear 'em,
But plainly show'd he could not bear 'em.
CELIA perceiv'd his secret thoughts,
But lik'd the youth with all his faults;
Yet 'twas unlike, she softly said,
The tales of love which she had read,
Where heroes vow'd, and sigh'd, and knelt;
Nay, 'twas unlike the love she felt;
Though when her Sire the youth would blame,
She clear'd his but suspected fame,
Ventur'd to hope, with falt'ring tongue,
"He would reform — he was but young;"
Confess'd his manners wrong in part,
"But then — he had so good a heart!"
She sunk each fault, each virtue rais'd,
And still, where truth permitted, prais'd;
His interest farther to secure,
She prais'd his bounty to the poor;
For, votary as he was of art,
He had a kind and melting heart;
Though, with a smile, he us'd to own
He had not *time* to feel in town;
Not that he blush'd to show compassion, —
It chanc'd that year to be the fashion;
And equally the modish tribe,
To Clubs or Hospitals, subscribe.
At length, to wake ambition's flame,
A letter from BELLARIO came;
Announcing the supreme delight,
Preparing for a certain night,

By FLAVIA fair, return'd from France,
Who took him captive at a glance:
The invitations all were given!
Five hundred cards! — a little heaven! —
A dinner first — he would present him,
And nothing, nothing must prevent him.
Whoever wish'd a noble air,
Must gain it by an *entrée* there;
Of all the glories of the town,
'Twas the first passport to renown.
Then ridicul'd his rural schemes,
His pastoral shades and purling streams;
Sneer'd at his present *brilliant* life,
His polish'd Sire, and high-bred Wife!
Thus, doubly to inflame, he tried
His curiosity, and pride.
The youth, with agitated heart,
Prepar'd directly to depart;
But, bound in honour to obey
His father, at no distant day,
He promis'd soon to hasten down,
Though business call'd him now to town;
Then faintly hints a cold proposal —
But leaves it to the Knight's disposal —
Stammer'd half words of love and duty,
And mutter'd much of — "worth and beauty:"
Something of "passion" then he dropt,
"And hop'd his *ardour*" — Here he stopt;
For some remains of native truth
Flush'd in his face, and check'd the youth;
Yet still th' ambiguous suffusion,
Might pass for artless love's confusion.

The doating father thought 'twas strange,
But fancied men like times might change;
Yet own'd, nor could he check his tongue,
It was not so when he was young.
That was the reign of Love he swore,
Whose halcyon days are now no more.
In that blest age, for honour fam'd,
Love paid the homage Virtue claim'd;
Not that insipid, daudling Cupid,
With heart so hard, and air so stupid,
Who coldly courts the charms which lie
In Affectation's half-clos'd eye.
Love then was honest, genuine passion,
And manly gallantry the fashion;
Yet pure as ardent was the flame
Excited by the beauteous dame;
Hope could subsist on slender bounties,
And Suitors gallop'd o'er two counties,
The Ball's fair partner to behold,
Or humbly hope — she caught no cold.
But mark how much Love's annals mend!
Should Beauty's Goddess now descend;
On some adventure should she come,
To grace a modish drawing-room;
Spite of her form and heavenly air,
What Beau would hand her to her chair?
Vain were that grace, which, to her son,
Disclos'd what Beauty had not done:
Vain were that motion which betray'd,
The goddess was no earth-born maid:
If noxious Faro's baleful spright,
With rites infernal rul'd the night,

The group absorb'd in play and pelf,
VENUS might call her doves herself.
As FLORIO pass'd the Castle-gate,
His spirits seem to lose their weight;
He feasts his lately vacant mind
With all the joys he hopes to find;
Yet on whate'er his fancy broods,
The form of CELIA still intrudes;
Whatever other sounds he hears,
The voice of CELIA fills his ears;
Howe'er his random thoughts might fly,
Her graces dance before his eye;
Nor was th' obtrusive vision o'er,
E'en when he reach'd BELLARIO's door;
The friends embrac'd with warm delight,
And FLAVIA's praises crown'd the night.
Soon dawn'd the day which was to show
Glad FLORIO what was heaven below.
FLAVIA, admired wherever known,
Th' acknowledg'd Empress of *bon-ton*;
O'er FASHION's wayward kingdom reigns,
And holds BELLARIO in her chains;
Various her powers; a wit by day,
By night unmatch'd for lucky play.
The flattering, fashionable tribe,
Each stray *bon-mot* to her ascribe;
And all her "little senate" own
She made the best *Charade* in town;
Her midnight suppers always drew
Whate'er was fine, whate'er was new.
There oft the brightest fame you'd see
The victim of a repartee;

For Slander's Priestess still supplies
The SPOTLESS for the sacrifice.
None at her polish'd table sit,
But who aspire to modish wit;
The *persiflage*, th' unfeeling jeer,
The civil, grave, ironic sneer;
The laugh, which, more than censure, wounds,
Which, more than argument, confounds.
There the fair deed, which would engage
The wonder of a nobler age,
With unbelieving scorn is heard,
Or still to selfish ends referr'd;
If in the deed no flaw they find,
To some base motive 'tis assign'd;
When Malice longs to throw her dart,
But finds no vulnerable part,
Because the Virtues all defend,
At every pass, their guarded friend;
Then by one slight insinuation,
One scarce perceiv'd exaggeration;
Sly RIDICULE, with half a word,
Can fix her stigma of — *absurd*;
Nor care, nor skill, extracts the dart,
With which she stabs the feeling heart;
Her cruel caustics inly pain,
And scars indelible remain.
Supreme in wit, supreme in play,
Despotic FLAVIA all obey;
Small were her natural charms of face,
Till heighten'd with each foreign grace;
But what subdu'd BELLARIO's soul
Beyond Philosophy's control,

Her constant table was as fine
As if ten Rajahs were to dine;
She every day produc'd such fish as
Would gratify the nice APICIUS,
Or realize what we think fabulous
I' th' bill of fare of ELAGABULUS.
Yet still the natural taste was cheated,
'Twas delug'd in some sauce one hated.
'Twas spice, 'twas sweetmeat, 'twas confection,
All poignancy, and all perfection.
Rich *Entremets*, whose name none knows,
Ragoûts, *Tourtes*, *Tendrons*, *Fricandeaux*,
Might picque the sensuality
O' th' hogs of EPICURUS' sty;
Yet all so foreign, and so fine,
'Twas easier to admire, than dine.
O! if the Muse had power to tell
Each dish,—no Muse has power to spell!
Great Goddess of the French *Cuisine!*
Not with unhallow'd hands I mean,
To violate thy secret shade,
Which eyes profane shall ne'er invade;
No! of thy dignity supreme,
I, with "mysterious reverence," deem!
Or, should I venture with rash hand,
The vulgar would not understand;
None but th' initiated know
The raptures keen thy rites bestow.
Thus much to tell I lawful deem,
Thy works are never what they seem;
Thy will this general law has past,
That nothing of itself shall taste.

Thy word this high decree enacted,
" In all be NATURE counteracted!"
Conceive, who can, the perfect bliss,
For 'tis not giv'n to all to guess,
The rapturous joy BELLARIO found,
When thus his ev'ry wish was crown'd.
To FLORIO, as the best of friends,
One dish he secretly commends;
Then hinted, as a special favour,
What gave it that delicious flavour,
A mystery he so much reveres,
He never to unhallow'd ears
Would trust it, but to him would show
How far true Frienship's power could go.
FLORIO, though dazzled by the *fête*,
With far inferior transport ate;
A little warp his taste had gain'd,
Which, unperceiv'd, till now, remain'd;
For, from himself he would conceal
The change he did not choose to feel;
He almost wish'd he could be picking
An unsophisticated chicken;
And when he cast his eyes around,
And not one simple morsel found,
O give me, was his secret wish,
My charming CELIA's plainest dish!
Thus Nature, struggling for her rights,
Lets in some little casual lights,
And Love combines to war with Fashion,
Though yet 'twas but an infant passion.
The practis'd FLAVIA tried each art
Of sly attack to steal his heart;

Her forc'd civilities oppress,
Fatiguing through mere graciousness;
While many a gay, intrepid dame,
By bold assault essay'd the same.
Fill'd with disgust, he strove to fly
The artful glance and fearless eye;
Their jargon now no more he praises,
Nor echoes back their flimsy phrases.
He felt not CELIA's powers of face,
Till weighed against *bon-ton* grimace;
Nor half her genuine beauties tasted,
'Till with factitious charms contrasted.
Th' industrious harpies hover'd round,
Nor peace nor liberty he found;
By force and flattery circumvented,
To play, reluctant, he consented;
Each Dame her power of pleasing tried,
To fix the novice by her side;
Of *Pigeons*, he the very best,
Who wealth, with ignorance, possest:
But FLAVIA'S rhetoric best persuades,
That Sybil leads him to the shades;
The fatal leaves around the room,
Prophetic tell th' approaching doom;
Yet, different from the tale of old,
It was the fair one pluck'd the gold;
Her arts the pond'rous purse exhaust;
A thousand borrow'd, stak'd, and lost,
Wakes him to sense and shame again,
Nor force, nor fraud, could more obtain.
He rose, indignant, to attend
The summons of a ruin'd friend,

Whom keen BELLARIO's arts betray
To all the depths of desperate play;
A thoughtless youth, who near him sat,
Was plunder'd of his whole estate;
Too late he call'd for FLORIO's aid,
A beggar in a moment made.
And now, with horror, FLORIO views
The wild confusion which ensues;
Marks how the Dames, of late so fair,
Assume a fierce demoniac air;
Marks where th' infernal furies hold
Their orgies foul o'er heaps of gold;
And spirits dire appear to rise,
Guarding the horrid mysteries;
Marks how deforming passions tear
The bosoms of the losing fair;
How looks convuls'd, and hagger'd faces,
Chase the scar'd Loves, and frighten'd Graces;
Touch'd with disdain, with horror fir'd,
CELIA! he murmur'd, and retir'd.
That night no sleep his eyelids prest:
He thought; and thought's a foe to rest:
Or if, by chance, he clos'd his eyes,
What hideous spectres round him rise!
Distemper'd Fancy wildly brings
The broken images of things;
His ruin'd friend, with eye-ball fixt,
Swallowing the draught Despair had mixt;
The frantic wife beside him stands,
With bursting heart, and wringing hands;
And every horror dreams bestow,
Of pining Want, or raving Woe.

Next morn, to check, or cherish thought,
His Library's retreat he sought;
He view'd each book, with cold regard,
Of serious sage, or lighter bard;
At length, among the motley band,
The IDLER fell into his hand;
Th' alluring title caught his eye,
It promis'd cold inanity:
He read with rapture and surprise,
And found 'twas pleasant, though 'twas wise;
His tea grew cold, whilst he, unheeding,
Pursu'd this reasonable reading.
He wonder'd at the change he found,
Th' elastic spirits nimbly bound;
Time slipt, without disgust, away,
While many a card unanswer'd lay;
Three papers, reeking from the press,
Three Phamplets thin, in azure dress,
Ephemeral literature well known,
The lie and scandal of the town:
Poison of letters, morals, time!
Assassin of our day's fresh prime!
These, on his table, half the day,
Unthought of, and neglected lay.
FLORIO had now full three hours read,
Hours which he us'd to waste in bed;
His pulse beat Virtue's vigorous tone,
The reason to himself unknown;
And if he stopp'd to seek the cause,
Fair CELIA's image fill'd the pause.
And now, announc'd, BELLARIO's name
Had almost quench'd the new-born flame:

" Admit him," was the ready word
Which first escap'd him, not unheard;
When sudden, to his mental sight,
Up rose the horrors of last night;
His plunder'd friend before him stands,
And — " not at home," his firm commands.
He felt the conquest as a joy
The first temptation would destroy.
He knew next day that Hymen's hand,
Would tack the slight and slippery band,
Which, in loose bondage, would ensnare
BELLARIO bright and FLAVIA fair.
Oft had he promis'd to attend
The Nuptials of his happy friend:
To go — to stay — alike he fears;
At length a bolder flight he dares;
To CELIA he resolves to fly,
And catch fresh virtue from her eye;
Though three full weeks did yet remain,
Ere he engag'd to come again.
This plan he tremblingly embrac'd,
With doubtful zeal and fluttering haste;
Nor ventur'd he one card to read,
Which might his virtuous scheme impede;
Each note, he dreaded, might betray him,
And shudder'd lest each rap should stay him.
Behold him seated in his chaise,
With face that self-distrust betrays;
He hazards not a single glance,
Nor through the glasses peeps by chance,
Lest some old friend, or haunt well known,
Should melt his resolution down.

Fast as his foaming coursers fly,
Hyde-Park attracts his half-rais'd eye;
He steals one fearful conscious look,
Then drops his eye upon his book.
Triumphant he persists to go;
But gives one sigh to *Rotten Row.*
Long as he view'd AUGUSTA's tow'rs,
The sight relax'd his thinking pow'rs;
In vain he better plans revolves,
While the soft scene his soul dissolves;
The tow'rs once lost, his view he bends,
Where the receding smoke ascends;
But when nor smoke, nor tow'rs arise,
To charm his heart or cheat his eyes;
When once he got entirely clear
From this enfeebling atmosphere;
His mind was brac'd, his spirits light,
His heart was gay, his humour bright;
Thus feeling, at his inmost soul,
The sweet reward of self-control.
Impatient now, and all alive,
He thought he never should arrive;
At last he spies Sir GILBERT's trees;
Now the near battlements he sees;
The gates he enter'd with delight,
And, self announc'd, embrac'd the knight:
The youth his joy unfeign'd exprest,
The knight with joy receiv'd his guest,
And own'd, with no unwilling tongue,
'Twas done like men when he was young.
Three weeks subducted, went to prove,
A feeling like old-fashion'd love.

For CELIA, not a word she said,
But blush'd, " celestial, rosy red!"
Her modest charms transport the youth,
Who promis'd everlasting truth.
CELIA, in honour of the day,
Unusual splendour would display:
Such was the charm her sweetness gave,
He thought her Wedgewood had been *séve*;
Her taste diffus'd a gracious air,
And chaste Simplicity was there,
Whose secret power, though silent, great is,
The loveliest of the sweet Penates.
FLORIO, now present to the scene,
With spirits light, and gracious mien,
Sir GILBERT's port politely praises,
And carefully avoids French phrases;
Endures the daily dissertation
On Land-tax, and a ruin'd Nation;
Listens to many a tedious tale
Of poachers, who deserv'd a jail;
Heard all the business of the Quorum,
Each cause and crime produc'd before 'em;
Heard them abuse, with complaisance,
The language, wines, and wits of France;
Nor did he hum a single air,
While good Sir GILBERT fill'd his chair.
Abroad, with joy and grateful pride,
He walks, with CELIA by his side:
A thousand cheerful thoughts arise,
Each rural scene enchants his eyes;
With transport he begins to look
On Nature's all-instructive book:

No objects now seem mean, or low,
Which point to HIM from whom they flow.
A berry or a bud excites
A chain of reasoning which delights,
Which, spite of sceptic ebullitions,
Proves Atheists not the best Logicians.
A tree, a brook, a blade of grass,
Suggests reflections as they pass,
Till FLORIO, with a sigh, confest
The simplest pleasures are the best!
BELLARIO's systems sink in air,
He feels the PERFECT, GOOD, and FAIR.
As pious CELIA rais'd the theme
To holy faith and love supreme;
Enlighten'd FLORIO learn'd to trace
In Nature's God the God of Grace.
  In wisdom as the convert grew,
The hours on rapid pinions flew;
When call'd to dress, that TITUS wore
A wig the alter'd FLORIO swore;
Or else, in estimating time,
He ne'er had mark'd it as a crime,
That he had lost but *one day*'s blessing,
When we so many lose, by dressing.
  The rest, suffice it now to say,
Was finish'd in the usual way.
Cupid, impatient for his hour,
Revil'd slow Themis' tedious power,
Whose parchment legends, signing, sealing,
Are cruel forms for Love to deal in.
At length, to FLORIO's eager eyes,
Behold the day of bliss arise!

The golden sun illumes the globe,
The burning torch, the saffron robe,
Just as of old, glad Hymen wears,
And Cupid, as of old, appears
In Hymen's train; so strange the case,
They hardly knew each other's face;
Yet both confess'd with glowing heart
They never were design'd to part;
Quoth Hymen, sure you're strangely slighted
At weddings not to be invited;
The reason's clear enough, quoth Cupid,
My company is thought but stupid,
Where Plutus is the favourite guest,
For he and I scarce speak at best.
The self-same sun which joins the twain,
Sees FLAVIA sever'd from her swain:
BELLARIO sues for a divorce,
And both pursue their sep'rate course.
Oh wedded love, thy bliss how rare!
And yet the ill-assorted pair:
The pair who choose at Fashion's voice,
Or drag the chain of venal choice,
Have little cause to curse the State;
Who *make*, should never *blame* their fate;
Such flimsy ties, say where's the wonder,
If Doctors' Commons snap asunder.
In either case, 'tis still the wife,
Gives cast and colour to the life.
FLORIO escap'd from Fashion's school,
His heart and conduct learns to rule;
Conscience his useful life approves;
He serves his God, his Country loves;

Reveres her laws, protects her rights,
And, for her interests, pleads or fights;
Reviews with scorn his former life,
And, for his rescue, thanks his Wife.

DAN AND JANE:

OR,

FAITH AND WORKS.

A TALE.

Good Dan and Jane were man and wife,
And liv'd a loving kind of life;
One point, however, they disputed,
And each by turns his mate confuted.
'Twas Faith and Works — this knotty question
They found not easy of digestion.
While Dan for Faith alone contended,
Jane equally good Works defended.
"They are not Christians sure, but Turks,
"Who build on Faith, and scoff at works,"
Quoth Jane — While eager Dan reply'd,
"By none but Heathens Faith's deny'd.
"I'll tell you, wife," at length quoth Dan,
"A story of a right good man;
"A patriarch sage, of ancient days,
"A man of Faith, whom all must praise.
"In his own country he possess'd,
"Whate'er can make a wise man blest;
"His was the flock, the field, the spring,
"In short, a little rural king.

" Yet, pleas'd, he quits his native land,
" By faith in the Divine command.
" God bade him go; and he, content,
" Went forth, not knowing where he went;
" He trusted in the promise made,
" And, undisputing, straight obey'd.
" The Heavenly word he did not doubt,
" But prov'd his Faith by going out."
Jane answer'd, with some little pride —
" I've an example on my side;
" And though my tale be somewhat longer,
" I trust you'll find it vastly stronger.
" I'll tell you, Daniel, of a man,
" The holiest since the world began:
" Who now God's favour is receiving,
" For prompt *obeying*, not *believing*.
" One only son this man possest,
" In whom his righteous age was blest;
" And more, to mark the grace of Heaven,
" This son by miracle was given;
" And from this child the word Divine
" Had promis'd an illustrious line.
" When lo! at once a voice he hears,
" Which sounds like thunder in his ears,
" God says — Go sacrifice thy son!
" — This moment, Lord, it shall be done.
" He goes, and instantly prepares,
" To slay this child of many prayers.
" Now here you see the grand expedience,
" Of *Works*, of actual sound *Obedience*,
" This was not *Faith*, but *act* and deed,
" The Lord commands — the child shall bleed.

" Thus Abraham *acted*," Jenny cried;
" Thus Abraham *trusted*," Dan replied.
" Abraham," quoth Jane, " why that's my man."
" No, Abraham's him I mean," says Dan:
" He stands a monument of *Faith*;"
" No, 'tis for *Works* the Scripture saith."
" 'Tis for his faith that I defend him:"
" 'Tis for obedience I commend him."
Thus he — thus she — both warmly feel,
And lose their temper in their zeal;
Too quick each other's choice to blame,
They did not see each meant the same.
At length, " Good wife," said honest Dan,
" We're talking of the self-same man.
" The works you praise I own, indeed,
" Grow from that faith for which I plead;
" And Abraham, whom for faith I quote,
" For works deserves especial note:
" 'Tis not enough of faith to *talk*,
" A man of God with God must walk:
" Our doctrines are at last the same,
" They only differ in the name.
" The faith I fight for, is the root;
" The works you value are the fruit.
" How shall you know my creed's sincere,
" Unless in works my faith appear?
" How shall I know a tree's alive,
" Unless I see it bear and thrive?
" Your works not growing on my root,
" Would prove they were not genuine fruit.
" If faith produce no works, I see,
" That faith is not a living tree.

" Thus faith and works together grow,
" No separate life they e'er can know;
" They're soul and body, hand and heart,
" What God hath join'd, let no man part."

AN

HEROIC EPISTLE

TO

MISS SALLY HORNE,

(AGED THREE YEARS,)

Youngest Daughter of Dr. HORNE, late Bishop of Norwich.

Written, during a visit at Dr. Kennicott's, Christ Church, Oxford, on the blank Leaves of "MOTHER BUNCH'S TALES;" *and showing the superiority of these Histories to most others.*

To thee, fair creature, SALLY HORNE,
And sure a fairer ne'er was born;
A grave Biographer I send,
By NEWBERRY *in the church-yard* penn'd;
(Or if to truth my phrase I stinted,
By NEWBERRY in the church-yard printed;)
Hight Mother Bunch — a worthier sage,
Ne'er fill'd, I ween, th' historic page;
For she, of Kings and Queens can prate,
As fast as patriotic KATE *;
Nor vents like her, her idle spleen,
Merely because *'tis* King or Queen.
KATE, who each subject makes a slave,
Would make each potentate a Knave;

* Mrs. MACAULAY had recently published her History of England.

Though Britons can the converse prove,
A King who reigns and rules by love.
While Mother Bunch's honest story,
Unaw'd by WHIG, unwarp'd by TORY,
Paints Sovereigns with impartial pen,
Some good, some bad, like other men.
Oh, there are few such books as these,
Which only mean to teach or please;
Read Mother Bunch, then, charming SALLY,
Her writings, with your taste, will tally.
No pride of learning she displays,
Nor reads one word a hundred ways;
To please the young she lays before them
A simple tale, *sans variorum:*
With notes and margins unperplex'd,
And comments which confuse the text.
No double senses interfere
To puzzle what before was clear;
Here no mistaken dates deceive ye,
Which oft occur from HUME to LIVY:
Her dates, more safe and more sublime,
Seize the broad phrase — "*Once on a time.*"
Then Mother Bunch is no misleader
In citing Authors who precede her;
Unlike our modern wits of note,
Who, purposely, and oft misquote;
Who injure history, or intend it,
As much as KENNICOTT to mend it;
And seek no less the truth to mangle,
Than he to clear and disentangle.
These short digressions we apply
Our Author's fame to magnify;

She seeks not to bewilder youth,
But all is true she gives for truth:
And, till to analyze you're able,
Fable is safe while given as fable;
As mere invention you receive it,
You know 'tis false, and disbelieve it.
Unlike that chemistry which brings,
And tries to mix incongruous things,
With genuine fact invention blending,
As if true history wanted mending;
And seasons, to mislead our youth,
Mere fable with a dash of truth.
In all these heterogeneous tales
The injudicious project fails;
Of *truth* you do not get your measure,
And of pure *fiction* lose the pleasure.
But Mother Bunch rejects such arts,
A sounder taste her work imparts.
Then, if for prosperous turns you look,
There's no such other history book.
Old authors show, nor do I wrong 'em,
How tyrants shar'd the world among 'em;
And all we learn of ancient times
Are human woes and human crimes.
They tell us nought but dismal tales,
How virtue sinks and vice prevails;
And all their labours but declare
The miseries of the good and fair:
How one brave captive in a quarrel
Was tumbled down hill in a barrel!
In fiery flames how some did fry,
Only because they dar'd not lie!

How female victims meet their doom,
At Aulis one, and more at Rome!
How ease the hero's laurels stain'd,
How CAPUA lost what CANNÆ gain'd!
How *he*, whom long success attends,
Is kill'd at home among his friends! *
How ATHENS, him who serv'd so well,
Rewarded with an oyster shell!
How NERO stabb'd a mother's breast!
Ah, barbarous CLIO, spare the rest;
Conceal these horrors, if thou'rt able,
If these be truths, Oh give me fable!
Till real deeds are fit to mention,
Regale my feelings with invention.
But Mother Bunch's morals tell
How blest all were who acted well!
How the good little girl's regarded,
And boy who learns his book rewarded!
How loss of favour follows rudeness,
While sugar-plums repay all goodness!
How she who learns to read or write
Will get a coach or chariot by't;
And not a faggot-maker's daughter
But has it at her christening taught her,
By some invited fairy guest,
That she shall wed a prince at least;
And through the whole this truth's pursu'd,
That to be happy's to be good.
If these to life be contradictions,
Mark the morality of fictions;

* JULIUS CÆSAR.

Axioms more popular they teach,
That to be good is to be rich!
For all the misses marry kings,
And diamonds are but common things;
While dames in history hardly get 'em,
Our heroines ope their mouths and spit 'em.
Oh, this is profitable learning,
Past cold Historians' dull discerning;
Who, while their annals they impart,
Expose, but seldom mend the heart.
I grant, they teach to know mankind,
To learn we're wretched, weak, and blind:
But till the heart from vice is clear,
Who wants to know what passes there?
Till Hercules to cleanse was able,
No doubt they *shut* th' Augean stable.
Here too in high emphatic tone
The power of female worth is shown;
Ev'n enterprising Joan of Arc
Falls short of true heroic mark;
THALESTRIS was a mere home-keeper,
And swift CAMILLA but a creeper.
Here deeds of valour are as common
As song or dance to real woman;
And meekest damsels find it facile
To storm a Giant's moated castle;
Where draw-bridges all open fly
If Virgin foot approaches nigh;
And brazen gates with twenty locks,
At which an army vainly knocks,
Fly ope, nor on their hinges linger,
At touch of Virgin's little finger.

Then slow attacks, and tiresome sieges,
Which history makes the work of ages,
Are here by means of fairy power,
Achiev'd with ease in half an hour.
Tactics! *they* prove, there's nothing in it,
Who conquer kingdoms in a minute:
They never hear of ten years' jars,
(For TROY's the average length of wars.)
And diplomatic form and rule
Might learn from Mother Bunch's school,
How rapidly are State intrigues
Convey'd with boots of seven long leagues.
Here farther too, our great Commanders,
Who conquer'd France, and rescued Flanders,
From Mother Bunch's Tales might hear
Some secrets worth a General's ear;
How armies need not stop to bait,
And heroes never drink or eat;
Wrapt in sublimer occupation
They scorn such vulgar renovation.
Your British Generals cannot keep
Themselves or followers half so cheap;
For men and horses, out of books,
Call, one for corn, and one for cooks;
And dull historic nags must stay
For provender of oats and hay:
While *these* bold Heroes wing their flight
Through twenty kingdoms in a night;
Of silvery dew they snatch a cup,
Or on a slice of moon-shine sup;
And while they fly to meet their Queen,
With half the convex world between,

Their milk-white palfreys, scorning grass,
Just crop a rose-leaf as they pass.
Then Mother Bunch's morals strike,
By praising friend and foe alike.
What virtue to the world is lost,
Because on thy ill-fated coast,
O CARTHAGE! sung alone by foes,
The sun of history never rose!
Fertile in heroes, didst thou own
The muse that makes those heroes known;
Then had the bright reverse appear'd,
And Carthaginian truth been clear'd:
On Punic faith, so long revil'd,
The wily African had smil'd:
And possibly, not much had err'd,
If we of *Roman* fraud had heard.
Then leave your ROBERTSONS and BRYANTS
For JOHN THE MURDERER OF GIANTS;
Since all mythology profane
Is quite as doubtful, quite as vain.
Though BRYANT, learned friend of youth,
His fable consecrates to truth;
And ROBERTSON with just applause
His finish'd portraits fairly draws.
Yet history, great RALEIGH knew,
And knowing, griev'd, may not be true;
For how the facts are we to know
Which pass'd a thousand years ago;
When he no just account could get
Of quarrel in the adjacent street?
Though from his chair the noise he heard,
The tale of each relater err'd.

But if the fact's recorded right,
The motive seldom comes in sight;
Hence, while the fairest deeds we blame,
We often crown the worst with fame.
Then read, if genuine truth you'd glean,
Those who were actors in the scene;
Hear, with delight, the modest Greek,
Of his renown'd *ten thousand* speak;
His commentaries * read again
Who led the troops and held the pen;
The way to conquest best he show'd
Who trod ere he prescrib'd the road.
Read *him*, for lofty periods fam'd,
Who CHARLES's age adorn'd and sham'd:
Read CLARENDON, unaw'd, unbrib'd,
Who rul'd th' events his pen describ'd;
Who law, and courts, and senates knew,
And *saw* the sources whence he drew.
Yet, lovely SALLY, be not frighten'd,
Nor dread to have thy mind enlighten'd;
Admire with me the fair alliance
Which mirth, at Maudlin, † makes with science;
How humour may with learning dwell,
Go ask Papa — for he can tell.

MARGERY TWO SHOES.

* CESAR.

† Dr. HORNE was at this time President of Magdalen College, Oxford, where this little Poem was written.

SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER:

A LEGENDARY TALE.

In Two Parts.

Of them who, wrapt in earth so cold,
No more the smiling day shall view,
Should many a tender tale be told,
For many a tender thought is due. — LANGHORNE.

SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER:

PART I.

O nostra Vita, ch'e si bella in vista!
Com' perde agevolmente in un momento,
Quel, ch'en molt' anni a grand pena s'acquista!—PETRARCA.

THERE was a young and valiant Knight,
SIR ELDRED was his name,
And never did a worthier wight
The rank of Knighthood claim.

Where gliding *Tay*, her stream sends forth,
To feed the neighbouring wood,
The ancient glory of the North,
Sir ELDRED'S castle stood.

The Knight was rich as Knight might be
In patrimonial wealth;
And rich in nature's gifts was he,
In youth, and strength, and health.

He did not think, as some have thought,
Whom honour never crown'd,
The fame a father dearly bought,
Could make the son renown'd.

He better thought, a noble sire,
Who gallant deeds had done,
To deeds of hardihood should fire
A brave and gallant son.

The fairest ancestry on earth
Without desert is poor;
And ev'ry deed of former worth
Is but a claim for more.

Sir ELDRED's heart was ever kind,
Alive to Pity's call;
A crowd of virtues grac'd his mind,
He lov'd, and felt for all.

When merit rais'd the sufferer's name,
He shower'd his bounty then;
And those who could not prove that claim,
He succour'd still as men.

But sacred truth the Muse compels
His errors to impart;
And yet the Muse reluctant tells
The fault of ELDRED's heart.

Though mild and soft as infant love
His fond affections melt;
Though all that kindest spirits prove
Sir ELDRED keenly felt:

Yet if the passions storm'd his soul,
By jealousy led on;
The fierce resentment scorn'd control,
And bore his virtues down.

Not Thule's waves so wildly break
To drown the northern shore;
Not Etna's entrails fiercer shake,
Or Scythia's tempests roar.

As when in summer's sweetest day
To fan the fragrant morn,
The sighing breezes softly stray
O'er fields of ripen'd corn;

Sudden the lightning's blast descends,
Deforms the ravag'd fields;
At once the various ruin blends,
And all resistless yields.

But when, to clear his stormy breast,
The sun of reason shone,
And ebbing passions sunk to rest,
And show'd what rage had done:

O then what anguish he betray'd!
His shame how deep, how true!
He view'd the waste his rage had made,
And shudder'd at the view.

The meek-ey'd dawn, in saffron robe,
Proclaim'd the op'ning day,
Up rose the sun to gild the globe,
And hail the new-born May;

The birds their vernal notes repeat,
And glad the thick'ning grove,
And feather'd partners fondly greet
With many a song of love:

When pious ELDRED early rose
The Lord of all to hail;
Who life with all its gifts bestows,
Whose mercies never fail!

That done — he left his woodland glade,
And journey'd far away;
He lov'd to court the distant shade,
And through the lone vale stray.

Within the bosom of a wood,
By circling hills embrac'd,
A little, modest mansion stood,
Built by the hand of taste:

While many a prouder castle fell,
This safely did endure;
The house where guardian virtues dwell
Is sacred and secure.

Of Eglantine an humble fence
Around the mansion stood,
Which serv'd at once to charm the sense,
And screen an infant wood.

The wood receiv'd an added grace,
As pleas'd it bent to look,
And view'd its ever verdant face
Reflected in a brook:

The smallness of the stream did well
The master's fortunes show;
But little streams may serve to tell
The source from which they flow.

This mansion own'd an aged Knight,
And such a man was he,
As Heaven just shows to human sight,
To tell what man should be.

His youth in many a well-fought field
Was train'd betimes to war;
His bosom, like a well-worn shield,
Was grac'd with many a scar.

The vigour of a green old age
His reverend form did bear;
And yet, alas! the warrior sage
Had drain'd the dregs of care:

And sorrow more than age can break,
And wound its hapless prey,
'Twas sorrow furrow'd his firm cheek,
And turn'd his bright locks grey.

One darling daughter sooth'd his cares,
A young and beauteous dame,
Sole comfort of his failing years,
And BIRTHA was her name.

Her heart a little sacred shrine,
Where all the Virtues meet,
And holy Hope and Faith divine
Had claim'd it for their seat.

She lov'd to raise her fragrant bower
Of wild and rustic taste,
And there she screen'd each fav'rite flower
From ev'ry ruder blast:

And not a shrub or plant was there
But did some moral yield,
For wisdom, by a father's care,
Was found in ev'ry field.

The trees, whose foliage fell away,
And with the summer died,
He thought an image of decay
Might lecture human pride:

While fair perennial greens that stood,
And brav'd the wintry blast,
As types of the fair mind he view'd,
Which shall for ever last.

He taught her that the gaudiest flowers
Were seldom fragrant found,
But wasted soon their little powers,
Dropt useless on the ground;

While the sweet-scented rose shall last,
And still retain its power,
When life's imperfect day is past,
And beauty's shorter hour.

And here the virgin lov'd to lead
Her inoffensive day,
And here she oft retir'd to read,
And oft retir'd to pray.

Embower'd she grac'd the woodland shades,
From courts and cities far,
The pride of Caledonian maids,
The peerless northern star.

As shines that bright and lucid star,
The glory of the night,
When beaming through the cloudless air
She sheds her silver light:

So BIRTHA shone! — But when she spoke
The Muse herself was heard,
As on the ravish'd air she broke,
And thus her prayer preferr'd: —

" O bless thy BIRTHA, Power Supreme,
" In whom I live and move,
" And bless me most by blessing him
" Whom more than life I love."

She starts to hear a stranger's voice,
And with a modest grace
She lifts her meek eye in surprize,
And sees a stranger's face.

The stranger lost in transport stood,
Bereft of voice and power,
While she with equal wonder view'd
SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER.

The virgin blush which spreads her cheek
With Nature's purest dye,
And all those dazzling beams which break
Like morning from her eye,

He view'd them all, and as he view'd
Drank deeply of delight;
And still his raptur'd eye pursued,
And feasted on the sight.

With silent wonder long they gaz'd,
And neither silence broke;
At length the smother'd passion blaz'd,
Enamour'd ELDRED spoke: —

" O sacred Virtue, heav'nly power!
" Thy wond'rous force I feel;
" I gaze, I tremble, I adore,
" Yet die my love to tell.

" My scorn has oft the dart repell'd
" Which guileful beauty threw;
" But goodness heard, and grace beheld,
" Must every heart subdue."

Quick on the ground her eyes were cast,
And now as quickly rais'd: —
Just then her father haply past,
On whom she trembling gaz'd.

Good ARDOLPH's eye his BIRTHA meets
With glances of delight;
And thus with courteous speech he greets
The young and graceful Knight: —

" O gallant youth, whoe'er thou art,
" Right welcome to this place!
" There's something rises at my heart
" Which says I've seen that face."

" Thou gen'rous Knight," the youth rejoin'd,
" Though little known to fame,
" I trust I bear a grateful mind —
" Sir ELDRED is my name."

" Sir ELDRED?" ARDOLPH loud exclaim'd,
" Renown'd for worth and power?
" For valour and for virtue fam'd,
" SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER?

" Now make me grateful, righteous Heaven,
" As thou art good to me,
" Since to my aged eyes 'tis given
" Sir ELDRED's son to see!"

Then ARDOLPH caught him by the hand,
And gaz'd upon his face,
And to his aged bosom strain'd,
With many a kind embrace.

Again he view'd him o'er and o'er
And doubted still the truth,
And ask'd what he had ask'd before,
Then thus address'd the youth: —

" Come now beneath my roof, I pray,
" Some needful rest to take,
" And with us many a cheerful day
" Thy friendly sojourn make."

He enter'd at the gate straightway
Some needful rest to take;
And with them many a cheerful day
Did friendly sojourn make.

THE END OF THE FIRST PART.

SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER.

PART II.

ONCE — in a social summer's walk,
The gaudy day was fled;
They cheated time with cheerful talk,
When thus Sir ARDOLPH said: —

" Thy father was the firmest friend
" That e'er my being blest;
" And ev'ry virtue Heaven could send,
" Fast bound him to my breast.

" Together did we learn to bear
" The casque and ample shield;
" Together learn'd in many a war
" The deathful spear to wield.

" To make our union still more dear,
" We both were doom'd to prove,
" What is most sweet and most severe
" In heart-dissolving love.

" The daughter of a neighbouring Knight
" Did *my* fond heart engage;
" And ne'er did Heav'n the virtues write
" Upon a fairer page.

" *His* bosom felt an equal wound,
" Nor sigh'd we long in vain;
" One summer sun beheld us bound
" In Hymen's holy chain.

" Thou wast Sir ELDRED's only child,
" Thy father's darling joy;
" On me a lovely daughter smil'd,
" On me a blooming boy.

" But man has woes, has clouds of care,
" That dim his star of life —
" My arms receiv'd the little pair,
" The earth's cold breast, my wife.

" Forgive, thou gentle Knight, forgive,
" Fond foolish tears *will* flow;
" One day like mine thy heart may heave,
" And mourn its lot of woe.

" But grant, kind Heaven! thou ne'er may'st know
" The pangs I now impart;
" Nor ever feel the parting blow
" That rives a husband's heart.

" Beside the blooming banks of *Tay*,
" My angel's ashes sleep;
" And wherefore should her ARDOLPH stay,
" Except to watch and weep?

" I bore my beauteous babes away
" With many a gushing tear;
" I left the blooming banks of *Tay*,
" And brought my darlings here.

" I watch'd my little household cares,
" And form'd their growing youth;
" And fondly train'd their infant years
" To piety and truth."

" Thy blooming BIRTHA here I see,"
Sir ELDRED straight rejoin'd;
" But why thy son is not with thee,
" Resolve my doubting mind."

When BIRTHA did the question hear,
She sighed, but could not speak;
And many a soft and silent tear
Stray'd down her damask cheek.

Then pass'd o'er good Sir ARDOLPH's face,
A cast of deadly pale;
But soon compos'd, with manly grace,
He thus renew'd his tale: —

" For him my heart too much has bled;
" For him, my darling son,
" Has sorrow press'd my hoary head;
" But Heav'n's high will be done.

" Scarce eighteen winters had revolv'd,
" To crown the circling year,
" Before my valiant boy resolv'd
" The warrior's lance to bear.

" Too high I priz'd my native land,
" Too dear his fame I held,
" T' oppose a parent's stern command,
" And keep him from the field.

" He left me — left his sister too,
" Yet tears bedew'd his face —
" What could a feeble old man do?
" He burst from my embrace.

" O thirst of glory, fatal flame!
" O laurels dearly bought!
" Yet sweet is death when earn'd with fame —
" So virtuous EDWY thought.

" Full manfully the brave boy strove,
" Though pressing ranks oppose;
" But weak the strongest arm must prove
" Against an host of foes.

" A deadly wound my son receives,
" A spear assails his side;
" Grief does not kill — for ARDOLPH lives
" To tell that EDWY died.

" His long-lov'd mother died again
" In EDWY's parting groan;
" I wept for her, yet wept in vain —
" I wept for both in one.

" I would have died — I sought to die,
" But Heaven restrain'd the thought,
" And to my passion-clouded eye
" My helpless BIRTHA brought.

" When lo! array'd in robes of light,
" A nymph celestial came,
" She clear'd the mists that dimm'd my sight —
" RELIGION was her name.

" She prov'd the chastisement divine,
" And bade me kiss the rod;
" She taught this rebel heart of mine
" Submission to its God.

" RELIGION taught me to sustain
" What Nature bade me feel;
" And Piety reliev'd the pain
" Which Time can never heal."

He ceas'd — with sorrow and delight
The tale Sir ELDRED hears;
Then weeping cries — " Thou noble Knight,
" For thanks accept my tears.

" O ARDOLPH, might I dare aspire
" To claim so bright a boon! —
" Good old Sir ELDRED was my sire —
" And thou hast lost a son.

" And though I want a worthier plea
" To urge so dear a cause;
" Yet, let me to thy bosom be
" What once thy EDWY was.

" My trembling tongue its aid denies;
" For thou may'st disapprove;
" Then read it in my ardent eyes,
" O! read the tale of love.

" Thy beauteous BIRTHA!" — " Gracious Power!
" How could I e'er repine,"
Cries ARDOLPH, " since I see this hour?
" Yes — BIRTHA shall be thine."

A little transient gleam of red
Shot faintly o'er her face,
And ev'ry trembling feature spread
With sweet disorder'd grace.

The tender father kindly smil'd
With fulness of content;
And fondly ey'd his darling child,
Who, bashful, blush'd consent.

O then to paint the vast delight
That fill'd Sir ELDRED's heart,
To tell the transports of the Knight,
Would mock the Muse's art.

But ev'ry kind and gracious soul,
Where gentle passions dwell,
Will better far conceive the whole
Than any Muse can tell.

The more the Knight his BIRTHA knew,
The more he priz'd the maid;
Some worth each day produc'd to view,
Some grace each hour betray'd.

The virgin, too, was fond to charm
The dear accomplish'd youth;
His single breast she strove to warm,
And crown'd with love his truth.

Unlike the dames of modern days,
Who *general* homage claim;
Who court the *universal* gaze,
And pant for *public* fame.

Then beauty but on merit smil'd,
Nor were her chaste smiles sold;
No venal father gave his child
For grandeur or for gold.

The ardour of young ELDRED's flame
But ill could brook delay,
And oft he press'd the maid to name
A speedy nuptial day.

The fond impatience of his breast
'Twas all in vain to hide,
But she his eager suit repress'd
With modest maiden pride.

When oft Sir ELDRED press'd the day
Which was to crown his truth,
The thoughtful Sire would sigh and say,
" O happy state of youth!

" It little recks the woes which wait
" To scare its dreams of joy;
" Nor thinks to-morrow's alter'd fate
" May all those dreams destroy.

" And though the flatterer Hope deceives,
" And painted prospects shows;
" Yet man, still cheated, still believes,
" Till death the bright scene close.

" So look'd *my* bride, so sweetly mild,
" On me, her beauty's slave;
" But whilst she look'd, and whilst she smil'd,
" She sunk into the grave.

" Yet, O forgive an old man's care,
" Forgive a father's zeal;
" Who fondly loves must greatly fear,
" Who fears must greatly feel.

" Once more in soft and sacred bands
" Shall Love and Hymen meet;
" To-morrow shall unite your hands,
" And — be your bliss complete!"

The rising sun inflam'd the sky,
The golden orient blush'd;
But BIRTHA's cheeks a sweeter die,
A brighter crimson flush'd.

The Priest, in milk-white vestments clad,
Perform'd the mystic rite;
Love lit the hallow'd torch that led
To Hymen's chaste delight.

How feeble language were to speak
Th' immeasurable joy,
That fir'd Sir ELDRED's ardent cheek,
And triumph'd in his eye!

Sir ARDOLPH's pleasure stood confest,
A pleasure all his own;
The guarded pleasure of a breast
Which many a grief had known.

'Twas such a sober sense of joy
As Angels well might keep;
A joy chastis'd by piety,
A joy prepar'd to weep.

To recollect her scatter'd thought,
And shun the noontide hour,
The lovely bride in secret sought
The coolness of her bower.

Long she remain'd — th' enamour'd knight,
Impatient at her stay,
And all unfit to taste delight
When BIRTHA was away,

Betakes him to the secret bower;
His footsteps softly move;
Impell'd by ev'ry tender power,
He steals upon his love.

O, horror! horror! blasting sight!
He sees his BIRTHA's charms
Reclin'd with melting, fond delight,
Within a stranger's arms.

Wild frenzy fires his frantic hand,
Distracted at the sight,
He flies to where the lovers stand,
And stabs the stranger knight.

" Die, traitor, die! thy guilty flames
" Demand th' avenging steel!" —
" It is my brother!" she exclaims,
" 'Tis EDWY — Oh, farewell!"

An aged peasant, EDWY's guide,
The good old ARDOLPH sought;
He told him that his bosom's pride,
His EDWY, he had brought.

O how the father's feelings melt;
How faint, and how revive!
Just so the Hebrew Patriarch felt,
To find his son alive.

"Let me behold my darling's face,
"And bless him ere I die!"
Then with a swift and vigorous pace,
He to the bower did hie:

O sad reverse! — Sunk on the ground
His slaughter'd son he view'd;
And dying BIRTHA, close he found,
In brother's blood imbru'd.

Cold, speechless, senseless, ELDRED near,
Gaz'd on the deed he had done;
Like the blank statue of *Despair*,
Or *Madness* grav'd in stone.

The father saw — so Jephtha stood,
So turn'd his woe-fraught eye,
When the dear, destin'd child he view'd,
His zeal had doom'd to die.

He look'd the woe he could not speak,
And on the pale corse press'd
His wan, discolour'd, dying cheek,
And silent, sunk to rest.

Then BIRTHA faintly rais'd her eye,
Which long had ceas'd to stream,
On ELDRED fix'd, with many a sigh,
Its dim departing beam.

The cold, cold dews of hastening death
Upon her pale face stand;
And quick and short her failing breath,
And tremulous her hand.

The cold, cold dews of hastening death,
The dim departing eye,
The quiv'ring hand, the short quick breath,
He view'd — and did not die.

He saw her spirit mount in air,
Its kindred skies to seek!
His heart its anguish could not bear,
And yet it would not break.

The mournful Muse forbears to tell
How wretched ELDRED died:
She draws the Grecian* Painter's veil,
The vast distress to hide.

* * * * *

Yet Heaven's decrees are just and wise,
And man is born to bear:
Joy is the portion of the skies,
Beneath them, all is care.

Yet blame not Heav'n; 'tis erring man,
Who mars his own best joys;
Whose passions uncontroll'd, the plan
Of promis'd bliss destroys.

* In the celebrated Picture of the Sacrifice of IPHIGENIA, TIMANTHES having exhausted every image of grief in the by-standers, threw a veil over the face of the father, whose sorrow he was utterly unable to express. PLIN. Book XXXV.

Had ELDRED *paus'd* before the blow,
His hand had never err'd;
What guilt, what complicated woe,
His soul had then been spar'd!

The deadliest wounds with which we bleed,
Our crimes inflict alone;
Man's *mercies* from GOD's hand proceed,
His *miseries* from his *own*.

THE PUPPET-SHOW:

A TALE.

A NOBLE Earl — the name I spare,
From reverence to the living heir —
Lov'd pleasure; but, to speak the truth,
Not much refinement grac'd the youth.
The path of pleasure which *he* trod
Was somewhat new, and rather odd;
For, that he haunted park or play,
His house's archives do not say;
Or that more modish joys he felt,
And would in opera transports melt;
Or that he spent his morning's prime
In Bond-street bliss till dinner-time:
No treasur'd anecdotes record
Such pastimes pleas'd the youthful Lord.
One single taste historians mention,
A fact, unmingled with invention;
It was a taste you'll think, I fear,
Somewhat peculiar for a Peer,
Though the rude democratic pen
Pretends that Peers are only men.
Whatever town or country fair
Was advertis'd, my Lord was there.
'Twas not to purchase or to sell —
Why went he then? the Muse shall tell.

At fairs he never fail'd to find
The joy congenial to his mind.
This dear diversion would you know?
What was it? 'twas a Puppet-show!
Transported with the mimic art,
The wit of Punch enthrall'd his heart.
He went, each evening, just at six,
When Punch exhibited his tricks;
And, not contented every night
To view this object of delight,
He gravely made the matter known,
He must and would have Punch his own;
For if, exclaims the noble Lord,
Such joys these *transient* views afford;
If I receive such keen delight
From a short visit every night,
'Tis fair to calculate what pleasure
Will spring from *owning* such a treasure.
I need not for amusements roam,
I shall have always Punch at home.
He rav'd, with this new fancy bit,
Of Punch's sense and Punch's wit.
Not more Narcissus long'd t' embrace
The watery mirror's shadowy face;
Not more Pygmalion long'd to claim
Th' unconscious object of his flame;
Than long'd th' enamour'd legislator
To purchase this delightful creature.
Each night he regularly sought him,
Nor did he rest till he had bought him.
Soon he accomplishes the measure,
And pays profusely for his treasure:

He bids them pack the precious thing,
So careful not to break a spring;
So anxious not to bruise a feature,
His own new coach must fetch the creature.
He safely brought the idol home,
And lodg'd beneath his splendid dome;
All obstacles at length surmounted,
My Lord on perfect pleasure counted.
If you have feelings, guess you may,
How glad he pass'd the live-long day.
His eating room he makes the station,
Of his new favourite's habitation.
"Convivial Punch!" he cried, "to-day
"Thy genius shall have full display!
"How shall I laugh to hear thy wit
"At supper nightly as I sit!
"Oh how delightful, as I dine,
"To hear some sallies, Punch, of thine!"
Next day, at table, as he sat,
Impatient to begin the chat,
Punch was produc'd; but Punch, I trow,
Divested of his puppet-show,
Was nothing, was a thing of wires,
Whose sameness disappoints and tires.
Depriv'd of all extrinsic aid,
The empty idol was betray'd.
No artful hand to pull the springs,
And Punch no longer squeaks or sings.
Ah me! what horror seiz'd my Lord,
'Twas paint, 'twas show, 'twas pasted-board!
He marvell'd why the pleasant thing
Which could such crowds together bring,

Which charm'd him when the show was full,
At home should be so very dull.
He ne'er suspected 'twas the scenery,
He never dreamt 'twas the machinery:
The lights, the noise, the tricks, the distance,
Gave the dumb idol this assistance.
Preposterous Peer! far better go
To thy congenial puppet-show,
Than buy, divested of its glare,
The empty thing which charm'd thee there.
Be still content abroad to roam,
For Punch exhibits not at home.
The moral of the tale I sing,
To modern matches home I bring.
Ye youths, in quest of wives who go
To every crowded puppet-show;
If, from these scenes, you choose for life
A dancing, singing, dressing, wife;
O marvel not, at home to find
An empty figure void of mind:
Stript of her scenery and garnish,
A thing of paint, and paste, and varnish.
Ye candidates for earth's best prize,
Domestic life's sweet charities!
If long you've stray'd from reason's way,
Enslav'd by fashion's wizard sway;
If by her witcheries still betray'd
You wed some vain fantastic maid;
Snatch'd, not *selected*, as you go,
The heroine of the puppet-show;
In every outward grace refin'd,
And destitute of nought but mind;

If, skill'd in every polish'd art,
She want simplicity of heart;
On her for bliss if you depend,
Without the means you seek the end;
You seek, o'erturning nature's laws,
A consequence without a cause;
A downward pyramid you place,
The point inverted for the base.
Blame your own work, not fate; nor rail
If bliss so ill secur'd should fail.
'Tis after fancied good to roam,
'Tis bringing Punch to live at home.

And you, bright nymphs, who bless our eyes
With all that art, that taste supplies;
Learn that accomplishments, at best,
Are but the garnish in life's feast;
And though your transient guests may praise
Your showy board on gala days;
Yet, while you treat each frippery sinner
With mere desserts, and call 'em dinner,
Your Lord, who *lives* at home, still feels
The want of more substantial meals;
Of sense and worth, which every hour
Enlarge affection's growing power;
Of worth, not emulous of praise,
Of sense, not kept for gala days.

O! in the highest, happiest lot,
By woman be it ne'er forgot,
That human life's no Isthmian game
Where sports and shows must purchase fame.
Though at the puppet-show he shone,
Punch was poor company *alone*.

Life is no round of jocund hours,
Of garlands gay, and festive bowers;
Even to the young, to whom I sing,
Its serious business life will bring.
Though bright the suns which now appear
To gild your cloudless atmosphere,
Oft, unawares, some direful storm
Serenest skies may soon deform;
In dim affliction's dreary hour
The flash of mirth must lose its power;
While faith a constant light supplies,
And virtue cheers the darkest skies.
To bless the matrimonial hours
Must three joint leaders club their powers:
Good Nature, Piety, and Sense,
Must their confederate aids dispense.
As the soft powers of oil assuage
Of ocean's waves the furious rage;
Lull to repose the boiling tide,
And the rough billows bid subside,
Till every angry motion sleep,
And softest tremblings hush the deep;
Good nature! thus thy charms control
The tumults of the troubled soul;
By labour worn, by care opprest,
On thee the wearied head shall rest;
From business and distraction free,
Delighted, shall return to thee;
To thee the aching heart shall cling,
And find that peace it does not bring.
And while the light and empty fair,
Form'd for the ball-room's dazzling glare,

Abroad, of speech so prompt and rapid,
At home, so vacant and so vapid;
Of every puppet-show the life,
At home a dull and tasteless wife:—
The mind with sense and knowledge stor'd
Can counsel, or can soothe its Lord;
His varied joys or sorrows feel,
And share the pains it cannot heal.
But, *Piety!* without thy aid,
Love's fairest prospects soon must fade.
Blest architect, rear'd by thy hands,
Connubial Concord's temple stands,
Though Wit, though Genius, raise the pile,
Though Taste assist, though Talents smile,
Though Fashion, while her wreaths she twine,
Her light Corinthian columns join;
Still the frail structure Fancy rears
A tott'ring house of cards appears;
Some sudden gust, nor rare the case,
May shake the building to its base,
Unless, bless'd Piety! thou join
Thy key-stone to insure the shrine;
Unless, to guard against surprises,
On thy broad arch the temple rises.

THE BLEEDING ROCK:

OR,

THE METAMORPHOSIS OF A NYMPH INTO STONE.

——— The annual wound allur'd
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate,
In amorous ditties all a summer's day;
While smooth Adonis from his native Rock
Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded. MILTON.

THE BLEEDING ROCK.

WHERE beauteous *Belmont* rears her modest brow
To view *Sabrina*'s silver waves below,
Liv'd young IANTHE, fair as beauty's queen;
She reign'd unrivall'd in the Sylvan scene;
Hers ev'ry charm of symmetry and grace,
Which aids the triumph of the fairest face;
With all that softer elegance of mind,
By genius heighten'd, and by taste refin'd.
Yet early was she doom'd the child of care,
For hapless love subdued th' ill-fated fair.
Ah! what avails each captivating grace,
The form enchanting, or the fairest face?
Or what each beauty of the heav'n-born mind,
The soul superior, or the taste refin'd?
Beauty but serves destruction to insure,
And *sense*, to feel the pang it cannot cure.
Each neighb'ring youth aspir'd to gain her hand,
And many a suitor came from many a land;
But all in vain each neighb'ring youth aspir'd,
And distant suitors all in vain admir'd.
Averse to hear yet fearful to offend,
The lover she refus'd she made a friend:
Her meek rejection wore so mild a face,
More like acceptance seem'd it than disgrace.
Young POLYDORE, the pride of rural swains,
Was wont to visit *Belmont*'s blooming plains.

Who has not heard how POLYDORE could throw
Th' unerring dart to wound the flying doe?
How leave the swiftest at the race behind,
How mount the courser, how outstrip the wind?
With melting sweetness, or with magic fire,
Breathe the soft flute, or sweep the well-strung lyre?
From that fam'd lyre no vulgar music sprung,
The Graces tun'd it, and Apollo strung.

Apollo, too, was once a shepherd swain,
And fed the flock, and grac'd the rustic plain.
He taught what charms to rural life belong,
The social sweetness, and the sylvan song;
He taught fair Wisdom in her grove to woo,
Her joys how precious, and her wants how few!
The savage herds in mute attention stood,
And ravish'd *Echo* fill'd the vocal wood;
The sacred Sisters, stooping from their sphere,
Forgot their golden harps, intent to hear:
Till Heaven the scene survey'd with jealous eyes,
And Jove in envy call'd him to the skies.

Young POLYDORE was rich in large domains,
In smiling pastures, and in flow'ry plains;
With these, he boasted each exterior charm,
To win the prudent, and the cold to warm;
The fairest semblance of desert he bore,
And each fictitious mark of goodness wore;
Could act the tenderness he never felt,
In sorrow soften, and in anguish melt.
The sigh elaborate, the fraudful tear,
The joy dissembled, and the well-feign'd fear,
All these were his; and his each treach'rous art
That steals the guileless and unpractis'd heart.

Too soon he heard of fair IANTHE's fame;
'Twas each enamour'd Shepherd's fav'rite theme;
Return'd the rising and the setting sun,
The Shepherd's fav'rite theme was never done.
They prais'd her wit, her worth, her shape, her air,
And even inferior beauties own'd her fair.
Such sweet perfection all his wonder mov'd;
He saw, admir'd, nay, fancied that he lov'd:
But POLYDORE no gen'rous passion knew,
Lost to all truth in feigning to be true.
No lasting tenderness could warm a heart,
Too vain to feel, to selfish to impart.
Cold as the snows of *Rhodope* descend,
And with the chilling waves of *Hebrus* blend;
So cold the breast where *Vanity* presides,
And the whole subject soul absorbs and guides.
Too well he knew to make his conquest sure,
Win her soft heart, yet keep his own secure.
So oft he told the well-imagin'd tale,
So oft he swore — how should he *not* prevail?
The well-imagin'd tale the nymph believ'd;
Too unsuspecting not to be deceiv'd:
She lov'd the youth, she thought herself belov'd,
Nor blush'd to praise whom every maid approv'd.
The conquest once achiev'd, the brightest fair,
When conquer'd, was no longer worth his care;
When to the world her passion he could prove,
Vain of his pow'r, he jested at her love.
The perjur'd youth, from sad IANTHE far,
To win fresh triumphs wages cruel war.
With other nymphs behold the wand'rer rove,
And tell the story of IANTHE's love;

He mocks her easy faith, insults her woe,
Nor pities tears himself had taught to flow.
To sad IANTHE soon the tale was borne,
How POLYDORE to treach'ry added scorn.
And now her eyes' soft radiance 'gan to fail,
And now the crimson of her cheek grew pale;
The lily there, in faded beauty, shows
Its sickly empire o'er the vanquish'd rose.
Devouring Sorrow marks her for his prey,
And, slow and certain, mines his silent way.
Yet, as apace her ebbing life declin'd,
Increasing strength sustain'd her firmer mind.
" O had my heart been hard as his," she cried,
" A hapless victim thus I had not died:
" If there be gods, and gods there surely are,
" Insulted virtue doubtless is their care.
" Then hasten, righteous Powers! my tedious fate,
" Shorten my woes, and end my mortal date:
" Quick let your power transform this failing frame,
" Let me be any thing but what I am!
" And since the cruel woes I'm doom'd to feel,
" Proceed, alas! from having lov'd too well;
" Grant me some form where love can have no part,
" No human weakness reach my guarded heart;
" Where no soft touch of passion can be felt,
" No fond affection this weak bosom melt.
" If pity has not left your blest abodes,
" Change me to flinty adamant, ye gods!
" To hardest rock, or monumental stone,
" So may I know no more the pangs I've known;
" So shall I thus no farther torments prove,
" Nor taunting rivals say she died for love:

" For sure, if aught can agravate our woe,
" 'Tis the feign'd pity of a prosp'rous foe."
Thus pray'd the nymph — and strait the Pow'rs address'd
Accord the weeping suppliant's sad request.
Then, strange to tell! if rural folks say true,
To harden'd Rock the stiff'ning damsel grew;
No more her shapeless features can be known,
Stone is her body, and her limbs are stone;
The growing rock invades her beauteous face;
And quickly petrifies each living grace:
The stone, her stature nor her shape retains,
The Nymph is vanish'd, but the Rock remains.
No vestige now of human form appears,
No cheek for blushes, and no eyes for tears:
Yet — strange the marvels Poets can impart!
Unchang'd, unchill'd, remain'd the glowing heart;
Its vital spirits destin'd still to keep,
It scorn'd to mingle with the marble heap.
When babbling Fame the wondrous tidings bore,
Grief seiz'd the soul of perjur'd POLYDORE;
And now the falsehood of his soul appears,
And now his broken vows assail his ears.
Appall'd, his smitten fancy seems to view
The nymph so lovely, and the friend so true;
For since her absence, all the virgin train
His admiration sought to win in vain.
Though not to keep him ev'n IANTHE knew,
From vanity alone his falsehood grew:
O let the youthful heart, thus warn'd, beware,
Of vanity, how deep, how wide the snare;

That half the mischiefs youth and beauty know,
From VANITY's exhaustless fountain flow.
Now deep remorse deprives his soul of rest,
And deep compunction wounds his guilty breast:
Then to the fatal spot in haste he flew,
Eager some vestige of the maid to view;
The shapeless Rock he mark'd, but found no trace
Of lost IANTHE's form, IANTHE's face,
He fix'd his streaming eyes upon the stone,
"And take, sweet maid," he cried, "my parting groan;
"Since we are doom'd thus terribly to part,
"No other nymph shall ever share my heart;
"Thus only I'm absolv'd" — he rashly cried,
Then plung'd a deadly poniard in his side!
Fainting, the steel he grasp'd, and as he fell
The weapon pierc'd the Rock he lov'd so well;
The steel assail'd the only living part,
And stabb'd the vital, vulnerable heart.
And though the rocky mass was pale before,
Behold it ting'd with ruddy streams of gore!
The life-blood issuing from the wounded stone,
Blends with the crimson current of his own;
From POLYDORE's fresh wound it flow'd in part,
But chief emitted from IANTHE's heart.
And though revolving ages since have past,
The meeting torrents undiminish'd last;
Still gushes out the sanguine stream amain,
The standing wonder of the stranger swain
Now once a year, so rustic records tell,
When o'er the heath resounds the midnight bell;

On eve of Midsummer, that foe to sleep,
What time young maids their annual vigils keep,
The tell-tale shrub *, fresh gather'd to declare
The swains who false, from those who constant are;
When ghosts in clanking chains the church-yard walk,
And to the wond'ring ear of fancy talk:
When the scar'd maid steals trembling through the grove,
To kiss the grave of him who died for love:
When, with long watchings, *Care*, at length oppress'd,
Steals broken pauses of uncertain rest;
Nay, *Grief* short snatches of repose can take,
And nothing but *Despair* is quite awake:
Then, at that hour, so still, so full of fear,
When all things horrible to thought appear,
Is perjur'd POLYDORE observ'd to rove
A ghastly spectre through the gloomy grove:
Then to the Rock, the *Bleeding Rock*, repair,
Where, sadly sighing, it dissolves to air.

Still when the hours of solemn rites return,
The village train in sad procession mourn:
Pluck ev'ry weed which might the spot disgrace,
And plant the fairest field-flow'rs in their place.
Around no noxious plant, or flow'ret grows,
But the first daffodil, and earliest rose:
The snow-drop spreads its whitest bosom here,
And golden cowslips grace the vernal year:
Here the pale primrose takes a fairer hue,
And ev'ry violet boasts a brighter blue.

* Midsummer-men, consulted as oracular by village maids.

Here builds the wood-lark, here the faithful dove
Laments his lost, or wooes his living love.
Secure from harm is ev'ry hallow'd nest,
The spot is sacred where true lovers rest.
To guard the Rock from each malignant sprite,
A troop of guardian spirits watch by night;
Aloft in air each takes his little stand,
The neighbouring hill is hence call'd *Fairy Land.**

* By contraction, *Failand*, a hill well known in Somersetshire; not far from this is *The Bleeding Rock*, from which constantly issues a crimson current. A desire to account for this appearance gave rise to a whimsical conversation, which produced these slight verses.

ODE

FROM H. M. AT BRISTOL, TO DRAGON,

MR. GARRICK'S HOUSE-DOG, AT HAMPTON.

I.

DRAGON! since lyrics are the mode,
To thee I dedicate my Ode,
And reason good I plead:
Are those who cannot write, to blame
To draw their hopes of future fame,
From those who cannot read?

II.

O could I, like that nameless wight *,
Find the choice minute when to write,
The *mollia tempora fandi!*
Like his, my muse should learn to whistle
A true *Heroical Epistle*,
In strains which never can die.

III.

Father of lyrics, tuneful HORACE!
Can thy great shade do nothing for us
To mend the British lyre?
Our luckless Bards have broke the strings,
Seiz'd the scar'd muses, pluck'd their wings,
And put out all their fire. †

* See the admirable Epistle to Sir WILLIAM CHAMBERS.

† A profusion of Odes had appeared about this time, which strikingly violated all the rules of Lyrical composition.

IV.

DRAGON! thou tyrant of the yard,
Great namesake of that furious guard
That watch'd the fruits Hesperian!
Thy choicer treasures safely keep,
Nor snatch one moment's guilty sleep,
Fidelity's criterion.

V.

O DRAGON! change with me thy fate,
To me give up thy place and state,
And I will give thee mine:
I, left to think, and thou to feed!
My mind enlarg'd, thy body freed,
How blest *my* lot and *thine!*

VI.

Then shalt thou scent the rich regale
Of turtle and diluting ale,
Nay, share the sav'ry bit;
And see, what thou hast never seen,
For thou hast but at HAMPTON been,
A feast devoid of wit.

VII.

Oft shalt thou snuff the smoaking venison,
Devour'd, *alone*, by hungry denizen,
So fresh, thou'lt long to tear it;
Though FLACCUS * tells a diff'rent tale
Of social souls who chose it stale,
Because their *friends* should share it.

* Hor. lib. ii. Sat. 2.

VIII.

And then on me what joys would wait,
Were I the guardian of thy gate,
How useless bolt and latch!
How vain were locks, and bars how vain,
To shield from harm the household train
Whom I, from love, would watch!

IX.

Not that 'twould crown with joy my life,
That BOWDEN *, or that BOWDEN's wife,
Brought me my daily pickings:
Though she, accelerating Fate,
Decrees the scanty mortal date
Of turkeys and of chickens.

X.

Though fir'd with innocent ambition,
BOWDEN, great Nature's rhetorician,
More flow'rs than BURKE produces;
And though he's skill'd more roots to find,
Than ever stock'd an Hebrew's mind,
And better knows their uses.

XI.

I'd get my master's ways by rote,
Ne'er would I bark at ragged coat,
Nor tear the tatter'd sinner;
Like him, I'd love the dog of merit,
Caress the cur of broken spirit,
And give them all a dinner.

* The Gardener and Poultry Woman at Hampton.

XII.

Nor let me pair his blue-ey'd Dame
With Venus' or Minerva's name,
One warrior, one coquet;
No; Pallas and the Queen of Beauty
Shunn'd, or betray'd that nuptial duty,
Which *she* so high has set.

XIII.

Whene'er I heard the rattling coach
Proclaim their long-desir'd approach,
How would I haste to greet 'em!
Nor ever feel I wore a chain,
Till, starting, I perceiv'd with pain
I could not fly to meet 'em.

XIV.

The master loves his sylvan shades,
Here, with the nine melodious maids,
His choicest hours are spent:
Yet I shall hear some witling cry,
(Such witling from my presence fly!)
"GARRICK will soon repent: *

XV.

"Again you'll see him, never fear:
"Some half-a-dozen times a year
"He still will charm the age;
"Accustom'd long to be admir'd,
"Of shades and streams he'll soon be tir'd,
"And languish for the stage."

* Mr. Garrick had just made his honourable retreat from the stage.

XVI.

Peace! — To his solitude he bears
The full-blown fame of thirty years;
He bears a nation's praise:
He bears his lib'ral, polish'd mind,
His worth, his wit, his sense refin'd;
He bears his well-earn'd Bays.

XVII.

When warm admirers drop a tear
Because the sun has left his sphere,
And set before his time,
I who have felt and lov'd his rays,
What *they* condemn will loudly praise,
And call the deed sublime.

XVIII.

How wise! long pamper'd with applause,
To make a voluntary pause,
And lay his laurels down!
Boldly repelling each strong claim,
To dare assert to Wealth and Fame,
"Enough of both I've known."

XIX.

How wise! a short retreat to steal,
The vanity of life to feel,
And from its cares to fly;
To act one calm, domestic scene,
Earth's bustle, and the grave between,
Retire, and learn to die.

HERE AND THERE:

OR,

THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT:

BEING SUITABLE THOUGHTS FOR A NEW YEAR.

Here, bliss is short, imperfect, insincere;
But total, absolute, and perfect *there*.
Here, time's a moment, short our happiest state;
There, infinite duration is our date.
Here, Satan tempts, and troubles e'en the best;
There, Satan's pow'r extends not to the blest.
In a weak sinful body *here* I dwell,
But *there* I drop this frail and sickly shell.
Here, my best thoughts are stain'd with guilt and fear;
But love and pardon shall be perfect *there*.
Here, my best duties are defil'd with sin;
There, all is ease without, and peace within.
Here, feeble faith supplies my only light;
There, faith and hope are swallow'd up in sight.
Here, love of self my fairest works destroys;
There, love of God shall perfect all my joys.
Here, things, as in a glass, are darkly shown;
There, I shall know as clearly as I'm known.
Frail are the fairest flow'rs which bloom below;
There, freshest palms on roots immortal grow.
Here, wants or cares perplex my anxious mind;
But spirits *there* a calm fruition find.

Here, disappointments my best schemes destroy;
There, those that sow'd in tears shall reap in joy.
Here, vanity is stamp'd on all below;
Perfection *there* on ev'ry good shall grow.
Here, my fond heart is fasten'd on some friend,
Whose kindness *may*, whose life *must* have an end:
But *there*, no failure can I ever prove,
GOD cannot disappoint, for GOD is love.
Here, Christ for sinners suffer'd, groan'd, and bled;
But *there*, He reigns the great triumphant head:
Here, mock'd and scourg'd he wore a crown of thorns;
A crown of glory *there* his brow adorns.
Here, error clouds the will, and dims the sight;
There, all is knowledge, purity, and light.
Here, so imperfect is this mortal state,
If blest myself, I mourn some other's fate.
At every human woe I *here* repine;
The joy of ev'ry saint shall *there* be mine.
Here, if I lean, the world shall pierce my heart;
But *there*, that broken reed and I shall part.
Here, on no promis'd good can I depend;
But *there*, the Rock of Ages is my friend.
Here, if some sudden joy delight inspire,
The dread to lose it damps the rising fire;
But *there*, whatever good the soul employ,
The thought that 'tis *eternal* crowns the joy.

THE IMPOSSIBILITY CONQUERED:

OR,

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF.

IN THE MANNER OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

THE OBJECTOR.

I.

EACH man who lives, the Scriptures prove,
Must as himself his neighbour love;
But though the precept's full of beauty,
'Tis an impracticable duty:
I'll prove how hard it is to find
A lover of this wondrous kind.

II.

Who loves himself to great excess,
You'll grant *must* love his neighbour less:
When self engrosses all the heart
How can another have a part?
Then if self-love most men inthrall,
A neighbour's share is none at all.

III.

Say, can the man who hoards up pelf
E'er love his neighbour as himself?
For if he did, would he not labour
To hoard a little for his neighbour?
Then tell me, friend, can hoarding elves
E'er love their neighbour as themselves?

IV.

The man whose heart is bent on *pleasure*
Small love will to his neighbour measure:
Who solely studies his own good,
Can't love another if he would:
Then how can pleasure-hunting elves
E'er love their neighbour as themselves?

V.

Can he whom sloth and loit'ring please
E'er love his neighbour like his *ease?*
Or he who feels ambition's flame
Loves he his neighbour like his *fame?*
Such lazy, or such soaring elves
Can't love their neighbour as themselves.

VI.

He whose gross appetites enslave him,
Who spends on feasts the wealth GOD gave him;
Full, pamper'd, gorged at ev'ry meal,
He *cannot* for the empty feel.
How can such *gormandising* elves
E'er love their neighbour as themselves?

VII.

Then since the man who lusts for *gold*,
Since he who is to *pleasure* sold;
Who soars in *pride*, or sinks in *ease*,
His neighbour will not serve or please;
Where shall we hope the man to find
To fill this great command inclined?

VIII.

I dare not blame GOD's holy word,
Nor censure Scripture as absurd:

But sure the rule's of no avail
If placed so high that all must fail;
And 'tis *impossible* to prove
That *any* can his neighbour love.

THE ANSWERER.

IX.

Yes, such there are of heavenly mould,
Unwarp'd by pleasure, ease, or gold;
He who fulfils the nobler part
By loving GOD with all his heart;
He, only he, the Scriptures prove,
Can, as himself, his *neighbour* love.

X.

Then join, to make a perfect plan,
The love of GOD to love of MAN;
Your heart in union both must bring,
This is the stream, and that the spring;
This done, no more in vain you'll labour,
A Christian can't *but* love his neighbour.

XI.

If then the rule's too hard to please ye,
Turn Christian, and you'll find it easy.
" Still 'tis impossible," you cry,
" In vain shall feeble nature try."
'Tis true; but know a CHRISTIAN is a creature
Who does things quite impossible to nature.

PLEASING RECOLLECTIONS

AND

JOYFUL ANTICIPATIONS.

ON BEING IMPORTUNED BY A FRIEND TO WRITE VERSES WHEN I WAS VERY ILL.

I WRITE in verse? how hard to ask!
Expect to ask in vain, —
A hand unequal to the task,
A head oppress'd with pain.

I lov'd, indeed, the Muse when young,
And faintly touch'd the lyre;
But long that lyre has lain unstrung,
Extinct the youthful fire.

Yet dwell I oft on scenes long past,
Scenes the fond heart retains;
There tender recollections last
Of mingled joys and pains.

For Mem'ry still delights to trace
Friends lov'd so long, so dear;
Blest with each talent, virtue, grace,
Such friends may claim a tear.

The rigid Moralist was ours,
Johnson of mighty mind;
Vigorous in intellectual powers,
At once both rough and kind. *

* When the author asked Dr. Johnson why he put his hands behind him when the celebrated French infidel Abbé Raynal held out *his* hand to him, his answer was, "No, child; I will not shake hands with an Atheist to please you or any body else."

Of Kennicott, the Hebrew sage,
Porteus and Horne we boast;
And Burke, the glory of his age,
His single self a host.

Reynolds! consummate was thy skill;
Well pleased thy power I trace,
Each portion of thy art to fill, —
Resemblance, colouring, grace.

Facility, invention pure,
In all thy works abound;
While suavity and classic lore
Thy social table crown'd.

Chaste Beattie! who can ever lose
The memory of thy tender strains,
The charms of thy enchanting Muse,
While feeling lasts, while taste remains.

Bryant, sagacious and profound,
On History shed new lights,
Proved the dire plagues on Egypt's ground
Congruous with all her impious rites.*

Though wit, though worth, no plea could find
Their forfeit lives to save,
Yet still their talents bless mankind, —
Their works survive the grave.

* This eminent Biblical scholar showed that the judgments inflicted on the Egyptians were in exact correspondence with the contemptible objects of their idolatrous worship.

Then turn we from the painful past, —
The future fills the sight;
What glorious scenes, what prospects vast,
What visions of delight! *

Prophets and kings have wish'd to see
The scenes which crowding rise,
And faith and hope are almost lost
In actual ecstasies.

If angels in their sphere rejoice,
One rescued soul to greet;
How will they raise th' enraptured voice
Whole *Continents* to meet!

Yes, we behold the Eastern star
With growing splendour rise;
And rays celestial beaming far,
To cheer e'en Polar skies.

From Java to the farthest West
Th' ETERNAL WORD shall reach;
And Truth Divine its power attest
In every clime and speech.

Shade of Buchanan! rest in peace,
Thy holy toils are o'er;
But their blest fruits, with quick increase,
Shall spread from shore to shore.

* Allusion is made in this and the following stanzas to the Bible, Missionary, and other Societies, for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom over the whole habitable globe, which are the glory of the present day.

In heaven thy Syrians thou shalt meet,
From earth's remotest sea;
And lay thy trophies at His feet,
Who died for them and thee!

Siberia spreads her frozen arms,
Released from sin and chains:
And Sharon's rose exhales its charms
On Afric's sultry plains.

Fell Juggernaut ere long shall weep
His altars overthrown;
Like Chemosh, Baal, and Moloch, sleep
Forgotten and unknown.

His orgies foul shall vanish all,
His impious rites be o'er;
See him with prostrate Dagon fall,—
He falls to rise no more!

The ONE GREAT SACRIFICE once paid,
No offering Heaven demands
But prayer, by contrite spirits made,
Pure hearts, and holy hands.

Shed, Sun of Righteousness, thy rays
On each benighted nation;
So shall we call its BULWARKS PRAISE,
Its WALLS AND GATES SALVATION.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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